Hugh THE Owen

Christian's Defence

Sybsittir Against the 1708.

Fears of Death.

WITH

Seasonable Directions

HOW TO

Prepare our selves to Die well.

Written Originally in *French*

By the late Reverend Divine of the Protestant Church of *PARIS*,

CHAR. DRELINCOURT;

Translated into *ENGLISH*

By *Marius D'Assigny*, B. D.

The Eighth Edition newly Corrected: With an Account of the AUTHOR, and his LAST MINUTES.

LONDON,

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THE PREFACE TO THE Christian Reader.

THE true Character of Monsieur Drelincourt, *the Author of these excellent Meditations, we find published by Mr.* Bayle *in his great Historical Dictionary, &c. as followeth:*

CHarles Drelincourt, Minister of the Church of *Paris*, was born the 10th of *July*, 1595, at *Sedan*, where his Father was admitted to an honourable Office, being Secretary to *Henry Robert de la Mark*, Duke of *Bouillon*, and Sovereign Prince of *Sedan*; afterwards he was advanced to be Secretary to the chief Council of that City. His Son *Charles* was put to study Ethicks and Divinity, in that University, but was sent to *Saumur* to compleat his Philosophy under Mr. *Duncan*. He was ordain'd Minister in *June* 1618, and began the Exercise of his Function near *Langres*, continuing there until he was called to the Church of *Paris* in *March* 1620. He was married in the Year 1625, to an only Child of a rich Merchant of *Paris*, call'd Monsieur *Balduck*, who had newly embrac'd the Protestent Religion. Providence blest him and his Wife with a numerous Issue, he having had sixteen Children by her; and gave no less Success to his Ministry. His Sermons were very powerful: but his chief Talent

was in comforting the Sick; and Performing all other neceſſary Offices of a careful Paſtor. He was very Faithful and Zealous, in reſpect of his own Congregation and others; his Judgment being always deſired in Matters of Moment. We cannot ſufficently commend the Services he has render'd to the Church of God by his many Writings he hath publiſhed; whether we examine his Books of Devotion or of Controverſy. There is ſo much Piety contained in the former, and ſo many excellent Texts of Scripture explain'd in the latter, that many Religious Perſons both have, and daily do find ſeaſonable Conſolations. That which he hath written againſt the Church of *Rome*, hath wonderfully ſtrengthen'd the Proteſtant Profeſſors. For by the Arguments that he brings, the Ignorant and Unlearned have been able to confound the Monks and Prieſts, and to maintain the Principles of their Religion againſt the ſubtileſt Miſſionaries. So that his Writings have caus'd him to be eſteemed *the Scourge of the Roman Diſputants*. Nevertheleſs, as he was belov'd of the contrary Party, ſo he was highly eſteem'd by the greateſt Lords of the Reformed Religion, as the Duke *de la Force*, the Mareſchals of *Chatillon*, *de Gaſſion*, and *Turenne*, and by the Lady *de la Tremouille*, *&c.* He had alſo great Reſpect paid him by the frequent Viſits of Ambaſſadors from ſeveral Foreign Princes and States. He was a Perſon that expreſs'd a particular Eſteem and Veneration for the Church of *England*, as appears by his Letters to Dr. *Durel*. He died the 3d of *November*, 1669, in ſuch an excellent and devout Diſpoſition of Mind, as may be expected in a Perſon who was animated with an holy Zeal, and had with an unwearried Diligence conſecrated all his Study and Labours to the Glory of God, and the Service of his Church. He was more frequent in Prayer towards the Concluſion of his life; and when he was private and alone, he never heard the Clock ſtrike, but he fell upon his Knees in Prayer to God.

The Preface.

This is the Approved Character publiſh'd of our Eminent Divine. After a long Experience and Practice amongſt departing Souls, and in the Houſes of Mourning, at the requeſt of ſome of his Congregation, who mightily approv'd of the proper and ſeaſonable Arguments that he made uſe of to fortifie dying Perſons againſt the Apprehenſions of Death; ſuitable to their Conditions and Temper, he publiſh'd this Book of Conſolations. *About Twenty Editions have been printed in* France; *and one at* Avignon *in the* Pope's *Dominions, with a Suppreſſion of the Reverend Author's Name. How many Impreſſions have been publiſh'd in* Holland, Germany *and elſewhere, I cannot determine. We find it Tranſlated into ſeveral Languages, but was not in our Mother Tongue until at the* Requeſt *of the Author's Son, now Dean of* Armagh *in* Ireland, *I Tranſlated it into* Engliſh: *What* Reception *it met with amongſt us, let this Eighth Impreſſion declare. I ſhall therefore judge it needleſs, after ſo many publick Teſtimonies of an univerſal Approbation, amongſt Chriſtians of all Profeſſions, to ſpeak any thing in commendation of this* Defence againſt the Fears of Death. *How ſerviceable it may be to Divines in Funeral Sermons, in Viſiting the Sick, the Poor and Afflicted, and how proper to be left as Legacies to ſurviving Friends at Funerals, I leave to others to judge, who ſhall ſincerely deſire to promote the Salvation of Souls.*

And now I cannot but take ſome notice here of the high Eſteem and Commendation that a late Apparition, too well atteſted to be ſlighted, hath given of this Book. An exact Account of it you have in the printed Relation hereunto præfix'd. To reject all Nar-

ratives

ratives of this kind as fictitious, argues, in my judgment, as great an Error, Weakneſs and Prejudice, as to believe all that is reported of Apparitions. This comes to us clothed with all the Appearance and Circumſtances of Truth, that may reaſonably be expected in this caſe. So that none but an unbelieving Sadducee *or a prophane Atheiſt, will offer to queſtion the* Reality. *To confirm the Poſſibility and Truth of ſome Apparitions, none can deny, that by this means our good God hath convey'd and confirm'd to us ſeveral of the Myſteries of our* Holy Religion ; *as the Conception, Birth, Incarnation, Reſurrection, and glorious Aſcenſion of our great Meſſiah by the Apparitions of Angels. And how often thoſe Heavenly Spirits were formerly viſible in Human Shapes, for the Advantage, Information and Safeguard of the Pious, the Word of God ſufficiently declares. Now as we live in ſuch an* incredulous Age, *that will not believe God, and his Divine Oracles, tho' atteſted by the working of Miracles, concerning the future State of the Righteous and Wicked, but requires a new Teſtimony and Evidence, as the Return of Souls from the Dead, to witneſs the Happineſs of Heaven, the Torments of Hell, and the Immortality of the Soul: Who knows, but to render Men more inexcuſable, God may condeſcend that a departed Soul, or its Good Angel in its ſtead, may appear to declare theſe infallible and undoubted Truths to an unbelieving World. But we find by Experience, as in this caſe, that this kind of Evidence is far more liable to Exceptions, to be contradicted and rejected, as uncertain and fabulous, and ſooner than the ſacred Methods that our wiſe God hath taken to perſwade Men to the Divine Doctrines of our* Salvation : *As*

Abraham

Abraham *declares in the Parable of the Rich Glutton, condemned to the Flames of Hell*; If they will not believe *Moſes* and the Prophets; *we may with more reaſon add, If they will not believe Chriſt, and his holy Apoſtles, and ſo many wonderful Miracles atteſting God's Omnipotency, and Revelations from above*, neither will they be perſuaded, tho' one roſe from the dead.

I muſt here acquaint my Reader, That whereas in the former Impreſſions of this Book, ſome Errata *have eſcaped, whereby the Author's Sence and Meaning may not be ſo clearly expreſs'd as in the Original: And whereas alſo upon ſome Subjects, our reverend Author diſtaſtes the Reader by too frequent Repetitions in his Prayers, containing Matters and Arguments of the foregoing Chapters: Theſe and ſuch trivial Objections have cauſed ſeveral Perſons to find fault, not only with the Tranſlation, but even the very Book it ſelf. To remedy therefore any thing of this nature, and to prevent all Complaints of this kind, and that ſo excellent and uſeful a Treatiſe may appear in our own proper and natural Language, not differing in any thing material from the* French *Copy; but ſuited as much as conveniently it may be, to the nicer Palates of our preſent Age; I have in this Edition taken the Pains to compare this Tranſlation with a Book printed at* Berlin, *the Court of the King of* Pruſſia, 1698. *I have been in this more exact, and have alter'd ſome Words and Phraſes, expreſſing more plainly the Author's Meaning, and in Terms more agreeable with our preſent Familiar Way of Speaking. Beſides, in this Edition of* Berlin, *I have met with two or three Paragraphs which are not in the former*

mer French *Impreſſions, and which I judg'd not convenient to be omitted. Some of the Prayers that ſeemed too prolix, I have abbreviated, comprehending only the principal Matters. And that nothing might be wanting in this Edition, that might more contribute to the Reader's Satisfaction; I have here render'd in* Engliſh *the laſt remarkable Paſſages of this Pious and Excellent Miniſter of Chriſt, never before printed in our own Tongue, as we find them at the End of the forementioned Book: That you may here at once, as in a Mirrour, ſee the Behaviour, Religious Speeches, Faith, Patience and Reſignation to the Will of God, of our Reverend Divine at his Deceaſe, reduc'd into Practice, according to the Excellent Advices and Conſolations that he recommends to us, to arm our ſelves againſt the Apprehenſions and Approaches of Death.*

I have no more to add; But I beſeech our merciful and Heavenly Father to grant us all the Grace, the like Faith, and Chriſtian Reſolution, *that we may not fear Death nor its Conſequences; but may be always ready prepared and provided to embrace it with Joy and Submiſſion to the Pleaſure of God and the Decrees of Heaven, whenever our Almighty Creator and Redeemer ſhall think fit to ſummon us, and take us to himſelf.* Amen.

M. D.

THis Book in the Original hath been ſo well approv'd of by all Perſons, tho' of different Judments in Religion, that it hath been about Twenty Times printed in *France*, beſides what hath been done in *Holland*, and elſewhere in other Languages: It is of very great uſe to Divines for Funeral Sermons; and is very fit to be given away by well-diſpoſed Perſons at Funerals, and of excellent uſe to every Chriſtian Reader.

A

True Relation

OF THE

APPARITION

OF ONE

Mrs. *VEAL*,

The next Day after her Death,

TO ONE

Mrs. *BARGRAVE*,

AT

CANTERBURY,

The 8th of *September*, 1705.

Which APPARRITION recommends the Peruſal of *DRELINCOURT*'s Book of *Conſolations againſt the Fears of Death.*

The Eighth Edition.

THE PREFACE.

THIS Relation is Matter of Fact, and attended with ſuch Circumſtances as may enduce any reaſonable Man to believe it. It was ſent by a Gentleman, a Juſtice of Peace at Maidſtone *in* Kent, *and a very intelligent Perſon, to his Friend in* London, *as it is here worded; which Diſcourſe is atteſted by a very ſober and underſtanding Gentlewoman, a Kinſwoman of the ſaid Gentlemans, who lives in* Canterbury, *within a few Doors of the Houſe in which the within-named Mrs.* Bargrave *lives; who believes his Kinſwoman to be of ſo diſcerning a Spirit, as not to be put upon by any Fallacy, and who poſitively aſſured him, that the whole Matter as it is related and laid down, is what is really true; and what ſhe her ſelf had in the ſame Words (as near as may be) from Mrs.* Bargrave's *own Mouth, who, ſhe knows, had no Reaſon to invent and publiſh ſuch a Story, nor any deſign to forge and tell a Lye, being a Woman of much Honeſty and Virtue, and her whole Life a Courſe, as it were, of Piety. The Uſe which we ought to make of it*

is, to consider, That there is a Life to come after this, and a Just God, who will retribute to every one according to the Deeds done in the Body; and therefore, to reflect upon our past Course of Life we have led in the World; That our Time is Short and Uncertain, and that if we should escape the Punishment of the Ungodly, and receive the Reward of the Righteous, which is the laying hold of Eternal Life, we ought for the Time to come, to turn to God by a speedy Repentance, ceasing to do Evil, and learning to do Well: To seek after God early, if happily he may be found of us, and lead such Lives for the future, as may be well pleasing in his Sight.

A RELA-

A RELATION OF THE APPARITION Of Mrs. VEAL.

THIS thing is ſo rare in all its Circumſtances, and on ſo good Authority, that my Reading and Converſation has not given me any thing like it; It is fit to gratifie the moſt Ingenuous and ſerious Enquirer. Mrs. *Bargrave* is the Perſon to whom Mrs. *Veal* appeared after her Death; ſhe is my Intimate Friend, and I can avouch for her Reputation, for theſe laſt fifteen or ſixteen Years, on my own Knowledge; and I can confirm the Good Character ſhe had from her Youth, to the Time of my Acquaintance. Tho' ſince this Relation, ſhe is Calumniated by ſome People, that are Friends to the Brother of Mrs. *Veal* who Appeared; who think the Relation of this Appearance to be a Reflection, and endeavour what they can to Blaſt Mrs. *Bargrave*'s Reputation; and to laugh the Story out of Countenance. But the Circumſtances thereof, and the Chearful Diſpoſition of Mrs. *Bargrave*, notwithſtanding the ill Uſage of a very Wicked Husband,

there is not yet the leaſt ſign of Dejection in her Face; nor did I ever hear her let fall a deſponding or murmuring Expreſſion; nay, not when actually under her Husband's Barbarity; which I have been witneſs to, and ſeveral other Perſons of undoubted Reputation.

Now you, you muſt know, that Mrs. *Veal* was a Maiden Gentlewoman of about Thirty Years of Age, and for ſome Years laſt paſt, had been troubled with Fits; which were perceived coming on her, by her going off from her Diſcourſe very abruptly, to ſome Impertinence: She was maintained by an only Brother, and kept his Houſe in *Dover*. She was a very Pious Woman, and her Brother a very ſober Man to all Appearance: But now he does all he can to Null or Quaſh the Story. Mrs. *Veal* was intimately acquainted with Mrs. *Bargrave* from her Childhood. Mrs. *Veal*'s Circumſtances were then Mean; her Father did not take care of his Children as he ought, ſo that they were expoſed to Hardſhips: And Mrs. *Bargrave* in thoſe Days had as unkind a Father, tho' ſhe wanted neither for Food nor Cloathing, whilſt Mrs. *Veal* wanted for both: Inſomuch that ſhe would often ſay, Mrs. *Bargrave, you are not only the beſt, but the only Friend I have in the World; and no Circumſtances of Life, ſhall ever diſſolve my Friendſhip.* They would often condole each others adverſe Fortunes, and read together, *Drelincourt upon Death*; and other good Books: And ſo like two Chriſtian Friends, they comforted each other under their Sorrow.

Some time after, Mr. *Veal*'s Friends got him a Place in the Cuſtom-Houſe at *Dover*, which occaſioned Mrs. *Veal* by little and little, to fall off from her Intimacy with Mrs. *Bargrave*, tho' there was never any ſuch thing as a Quarrel; but an Indifferency came on by Degrees, till at laſt Mrs. *Bargrave*

grave had not ſeen her in two Years and a half; tho' above a Twelve Month of the time, Mrs. *Bargrave* had been abſent from *Dover*, and this laſt half Year, has been in *Canterbury* about two Months of the time, dwelling in a Houſe of her own.

In this Houſe on the Eighth of *September*, *viz.* 1705. She was ſitting alone in the Forenoon, thinking over her Unfortunate Life, and arguing her ſelf into a due Reſignation to Providence, tho' her Condition ſeemed hard. And, ſaid ſhe, *I have been provided for hitherto, and doubt not but I ſhall be ſtill; and am well ſatisfied, that my afflictions ſhall end, when it is moſt fit for me*: And then took up her ſewing-Work, which ſhe had no ſooner done, but ſhe hears a Knocking at the Door; ſhe went to ſee who it was there, and this proved to be Mrs. *Veal*, her Old Friend, who was in a Riding-Habit: At that Moment of Time, the Clock ſtruck Twelve at Noon.

Madam, ſays, Mrs. *Bargrave*, *I am ſurprized to ſee you, you have been ſo long a Stranger*; but told her, *ſhe was glad to ſee her*, and offered to ſalute her, which Mrs. *Veal* complied with, till their Lips almoſt touched, and then Mrs. *Veal* drew her Hand croſs her own Eyes, and ſaid, *I am not very well*, and ſo waved it. She told Mrs. *Bargarve* ſhe was going a Journey, and had a great Mind to ſee her firſt: But, ſays Mrs. *Bargrave*, 'How came you to 'take a Journey alone? I am amazed at it, be-'cauſe I know you have a fond Brother. O! ſays Mrs. *Veal*, *I gave my Brother the Slip, and came away, becauſe I had ſo great a Mind to ſee you before I took my Journey.* So Mrs. *Bargrave* went in with her, into another Room within the firſt, and Mrs. *Veal* ſat her down in an Elbow-Chair, in which Mrs. *Bargrave* was ſitting when ſhe heard Mrs. *Veal* Knock. Then, ſays Mrs. *Veal*, 'My dear Friend, 'I am come to renew our old Friendſhip again,

'and beg your Pardon for my breach of it, and 'if you can forgive me, you are the beſt of Women. O, ſays Mrs. *Bargrave*, 'don't mention 'ſuch a thing; I have not had an uneaſie Thought 'about it, I can eaſily forgive it. What did you 'think of me, ſays Mrs. *Veal*? Says Mrs *Bargrave*, 'I thought you were like the reſt of the World, 'and that Proſperity had made you forget your 'ſelf and me. Then Mrs. *Veal* reminded Mrs *Bargrave* of the many Friendly Offices ſhe did her in former Days, and much of the Converſation they had with each other in the Times of their Adverſity; what Books they read, and what Comfort in particular they received from *Drelincourt's Book of Death*, which was the beſt, ſhe ſaid, on that Subject, ever Wrote. She alſo mentioned Dr. *Sherlock*, and two *Dutch* Books which were Tranſlated, Wrote upon Death, and ſeveral others: But, *Drelincourt*, ſhe ſaid, had the cleareſt Notions of Death, and of the future State, of any who have handled that Subject. Then ſhe asked Mrs. *Bargrave*, whether ſhe had *Drelincourt*; ſhe ſaid Yes. Says Mrs. *Veal*, fetch it; and ſo Mrs. *Bargrave* goes up Stairs, and brings it down. Says Mrs. *Veal*, 'Dear Mrs. *Bar-* 'grave, if the Eyes of our Faith were as open as 'the Eyes of our Body, we ſhould ſee numbers of 'Angels about us for our Guard: The Notions we 'have of Heaven now, are nothing like what it 'is, as *Drelincourt* ſays. Therefore be comforted 'under your Afflictions, and believe that the Al- 'mighty has a particular Regard to you; and that 'your Afflictions are Marks of God's Favour; and 'when they have done the Buſineſs they are ſent 'for, they ſhall be removed from you. And believe me, my dear Friend, believe what I ſay to you, 'One Minute of Future Happineſs will infi- 'nitely reward you for all your Sufferings. For I 'can never believe, (and claps her Hand upon

her

her Knee with great Earneſtneſs, which indeed ran thro' moſt of her Diſcourſe) *that ever God will ſuffer you to ſpend all your Days in this afflicted State: But be aſſured that your Afflictions ſhall leave you, or you them in a ſhort Time.* She ſpake in that Pathetical and Heavenly manner, that Mrs. *Bargrave* wept ſeveral Times; ſhe was ſo deeply affected with it. Then Mrs. *Veal* mentioned Dr. *Horneck*'s *Aſcetick*, at the End of which he gives an Account of the Lives of the Primitive Chriſtians. Their Pattern ſhe recommended to our Imitation, and ſaid, *their Converſation was not like this of our Age. For now* (ſays ſhe) *there is nothing but frothy vain Diſcourſe, which is far different from theirs. Theirs was to Edification, and to build one another up in Faith: So that they were not as we are, nor we as they are; but,* ſaid ſhe, *we ought to do as they did. There was a Hearty Friendſhip among them; but where is it now to be found?* Says Mrs. *Bargrave, 'tis hard indeed, to find a true Friend in theſe Days.* Says Mrs. *Veal*, Mr. *Norris* has a fine Copy of Verſes, call'd *Friendſhip in Perfection*, which I wonderfully admire, have you ſeen the Book, ſays Mrs. *Veal?* No, ſays Mrs. *Bargrave, but I have the Verſes of my own writing out. Have you*, ſays Mrs. *Veal, then fetch them*; which ſhe did from above Stairs, and offered them to Mrs. *Veal* to read, who refuſed, and waved the Thing, ſaying, *holding down her Head would make it ake*, and then deſired Mrs. *Bargrave* to read them to her, which ſhe did. As they were admiring Friendſhip, Mrs. *Veal* ſaid, *Dear Mrs.* Bargrave, *I ſhall love you forever:* In theſe Verſes there is twice uſed the Word *Eliſian. Ah!* ſays Mrs. *Veal, Theſe Poets have ſuch Names for Heaven.* She would often draw her Hand croſs her own Eyes, and ſay, Mrs. *Bargrave, Don't you think I am mightily impaired by my Fits?* No, ſays Mrs. *Bargrave, I think you look as well as ever I knew you.*

After

After all this Diſcourſe, which the Apparition put in Words much finer than Mrs. *Bargrave* ſaid ſhe could pretend to, and as much more than ſhe can remember; (for it cannot be thought that an Hour and three quarters Converſation could all be retained, though the main of it, ſhe thinks ſhe does.) She ſaid to Mrs. *Bargrave, She would have her write a Letter to her Brother, and tell him, ſhe would have him give Rings to ſuch and ſuch; and that there was a Purſe of Gold in her Cabinet, and that ſhe would have two broad Pieces given to her Couſin* Watſon. Talking at this Rate, Mrs. *Bargrave* thought that a Fit was coming upon her, and ſo placed her ſelf in a Chair, juſt before her Knees, to keep her from falling to the Ground, if her Fits ſhould occaſion it; for the Elbow-Chair ſhe thought would keep her from falling on either ſide. And to divert Mrs. *Veal* as ſhe thought, took hold of her Gown-ſleeve ſeveral times and commended it. Mrs. *Veal* told her is was a ſcowered Silk, and newly made up. But for all this Mrs. *Veal* perſiſted in her Requeſt, and told Mrs. *Bargrave* ſhe muſt not deny her: And ſhe would have her tell her Brother all their Converſation when ſhe had Opportunity. Dear Mrs. *Veal*, ſays Mrs. *Bargrave, This ſeems ſo impertinent, that I cannot tell how to comply with it; and what a mortifying Story will our Converſation be to a Young Gentleman?* Why, ſays Mrs. *Bargrave, 'tis much better methinks to do it your ſelf.* No, ſays Mrs. *Veal, tho' it ſeem impertinent to you now, you will ſee more Reaſon for it hereafter.* Mrs. *Bargrave* then to ſatisfie her Importunity, was going to fetch a Pen and Ink; but Mrs. *Veal ſaid, let it alone now, and do it when I am gone; but you muſt be ſure to do it:* which was one of the laſt things ſhe enjoyned her at parting; and ſo ſhe promiſed her.

Then Mrs. *Veal* asked for Mrs. *Bargrave*'s Daughter; ſhe ſaid ſhe was not at home; but if you have

have a Mind to ſee her, ſays Mrs. *Bargrave*, I'll ſend for her. *Do*, ſays Mrs. *Veal*. On which ſhe left her, and went to a Neighbour's to ſend for her; and by the Time Mrs. *Bargrave* was returning, Mrs. *Veal* was got without the Door in the Street, in the face of the *Beaſt-Market*, on a *Saturday* (which is Market-day) and ſtood ready to part, as ſoon as Mrs. *Bargrave* came to her. She asked her, *why ſhe was in ſuch haſt?* She ſaid, *ſhe muſt be going; tho' perhaps ſhe might not go her Journey till Monday.* And told Mrs. *Bargrave ſhe hoped ſhe ſhould ſee her again at her Couſin* Watſon's *before ſhe went whither ſhe was going.* Then ſhe ſaid, *ſhe would take her leave of her*, and walked from Mrs. *Bargrave* in her View, till a Turning interrupted the ſight of her, which was three quarters after one in the Afternoon.

Mrs. *Veal* died the 7th of *September* at 12 a Clock at Noon, of her Fits, and had not above four Hours Senſes before her Death, in which Time ſhe received the Sacrament. The next day after Mrs. *Veal's* appearing being *Sunday*, Mrs. *Bargrave* was mightily indiſpoſed with a Cold and a ſore Throat, that ſhe could not go out that Day; but on *Monday* Morning ſhe ſends a Perſon to Captain *Watſon's* to know if Mrs *Veal* were there. They wondered at Mrs. *Bargrave's* Enquiry, and ſent her Word; that ſhe was not there, nor was expected. At this Anſwer Mrs. *Bargrave* told the Maid ſhe had certainly miſtook the Name, or made ſome Blunder. And tho' ſhe was ill, ſhe put on her Hood, and went her ſelf to Captain *Watſon's*, tho' ſhe knew none of the Family, to ſee if Mrs. *Veal* was there or not. They ſaid they wondered at her asking, for that ſhe had not been in Town; they were ſure, if ſhe had, ſhe would have been there. Says Mrs *Bargrave*, *I am ſure ſhe was with me on* Saturday *almoſt two Hours.* They ſaid it was impoſſible, for they muſt have ſeen her if ſhe had. In comes Captain *Watſon*,

while

while they were in Diſpute, and ſaid that Mrs. *Veal* was certainly dead and her Eſcutcheons were making. This ſtrangely ſurprized Mrs. *Bargrave*, when ſhe went to the Perſon immediately who had the Care of them and found it true. Then ſhe related the whole Story to Captain *Watſon*'s Family, and what Gown ſhe had on, and how ſtriped; and that Mrs. *Veal* told her it was ſcowred. Then Mrs. *Watſon*, cried out, *You have ſeen her indeed, for none knew but Mrs.* Veal *and my ſelf that the Gown was ſcower'd.* And Mrs. *Watſon* owned that ſhe deſcribed the Gown exactly; for, ſaid ſhe, *I helpt her to make it up.* This Mrs. *Watſon* blazed all about the Town, and avouched the demonſtration of the Truth of Mrs. *Bargrave*'s ſeeing Mrs. *Veal*'s Apparition. And Captain *Watſon* carried two Gentlemen immediately to Mrs. *Bargrave*'s Houſe, to hear the Relation from her own Mouth. And when it ſpread ſo faſt, that Gentlemen and Perſons of Quality, the Judicious and Sceptical part of the World, flocked in upon her; which at beſt became ſuch a Task, that ſhe was forced to go out of the Way. For they were in general, extreamly ſatisfied of the Truth of the Thing; and plainly ſaw, that Mrs. *Bargrave* was no Hypochondraick, for ſhe always appears with ſuch a chearful Air, and pleaſing Mein, that ſhe has gain'd the Favour and Eſteem of all the Gentry: And its thought a great Favour if they can but get the Relation from her own Mouth. I ſhould have told you before, that Mrs. *Veal* told Mrs. *Bargrave*, that her Siſter and Brother in Law were juſt come down from *London* to ſee her. Says Mrs. *Bargrave*, *How came you to order Matters ſo ſtrangly? It could not be helpt*, ſaid Mrs. *Veal*; and her Siſter and Brother did come to ſee her, and entred the Town of *Dover*, juſt as Mrs. *Veal* was expiring. Mrs. *Bargrave* asked her whether ſhe would drink ſome Tea. Says Mrs. *Veal*, *I do not care if I do; but I'll warrant you this*

mad

mad Fellow (meaning Mrs. *Bargrave*'s Husband) *has broke all your Trinkets.* But ſays, Mrs. *Bargrave, I'll get ſomething to drink in for all that*; but Mrs. *Veal* waved it, and ſaid, *it is no matter, let it alone*, and ſo it paſſed.

All the Time I ſat with Mrs. *Bargrave*, which was ſome Hours, ſhe recollected freſh ſayings of Mrs. *Veal*. And one material Thing more ſhe told Mrs. *Bargrave*, that old Mr. *Breton* allowed Mrs. *Veal* Ten Pounds a Year which was a Secret, and unknown to Mrs. *Bargrave*, till Mrs. *Veal* told it her. Mrs. *Bargrave* never varies in her Story, which puzzles thoſe who doubt of the Truth, or are unwilling to believe it. A Servant in the Neighbour's Yard adjoyning to Mrs. *Bargrave*'s Houſe heard her talking to ſome Body, an Hour of the Time Mrs. *Veal* was with her. Mrs. *Bargrave* went out to her next Neighbours the very Moment ſhe parted with Mrs. *Veal*, and told her what raviſhing Converſation ſhe had with an old Friend, and told the whole of it. *Drelincourt*'s *Book of Death* is, ſince this happened, bought up ſtrangely. And it is to be obſerved, that notwithſtanding all this Trouble and Fatigue, Mrs. *Bargrave* has undergone upon this Account, ſhe never took the value of a Farthing, nor ſuffered her Daughter to to take any thing of any Body, and therefore can have no Intereſt in telling the Story.

But Mr. *Veal* does what he can to ſtifle the matter, and ſaid, he would ſee Mrs. *Bargrave*; but yet it is certain matter of fact, that he has been at Captain *Watſon*'s ſince the Death of his Siſter, and yet never went near Mrs. *Bargrave*; and ſome of his Friends report her to be a Liar, and that ſhe knew of Mr. *Breton*'s Ten Pound a Year. But the Perſon who pretends to ſay ſo, has the Reputation of a notorious Liar, among Perſons which I know to be of undoubted Repute. Now Mr.

Veal

Veal is more of a Gentleman than to ſay ſhe Lies; but ſays, a bad Husband has crazed her. But ſhe needs only to preſent her ſelf, and it will effectually confute that Pretence. Mr. *Veal* ſays, he asked his Siſter on her Death Bed, whether ſhe had a mind to diſpoſe of any thing, and ſhe ſaid, No. Now what the Things which Mrs *Veal*'s Apparition would have diſpoſed of, were ſo Trifling, and nothing of Juſtice aimed at in their Diſpoſal, that the Deſign of it appears to me to be only in order to make Mrs. *Bargrave* ſo to demonſtrate the Truth of her Appearance, as to ſatisfie the World of the Reality thereof, as to what ſhe had ſeen and heard; and to ſecure her Reputation among the Reaſonable and Underſtanding part of Mankind. And then again, Mr. *Veal* owns that there was a Purſe of Gold; but it was not found in her Cabinet but in a Comb-box. This looks improbable, for that Mrs. *Watſon* owned that Mrs. *Veal* was ſo very Careful of the Key of her Cabinet, that ſhe would truſt no Body with it. And if ſo, no doubt ſhe would not truſt her Gold out of it. And Mrs *Veal*'s often drawing her Hand over her Eyes, and asking Mrs. *Bargrave*, whether her Fits had not impaired her; looks to me as if ſhe did it on purpoſe to remind Mrs. *Bargrave* of her Fits to prepare her not to think it ſtrange that ſhe ſhould put her upon writing to her Brother, to dipſoſe of Rings and Gold, which looked ſo much like a dying Perſons Requeſt; and it took accordingly with Mrs. *Bargrave*, as the Effect of her Fits coming upon her; and was one of the many Inſtances of her wonderful Love to her, and Care of her, that ſhe ſhould not be affrighted; which indeed appears in her whole management; particularly, in her coming to her in the Day-time, waving the Salutation, and and when ſhe was alone; and then the manner of her parting, to prevent a ſecond Attempt to Salute her.

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Now, why Mr. *Veal* ſhould think this Relation a Reflection, (as 'tis plain he does, by his endeavouring to ſtifle it) I cannot imagine, becauſe the Generality believe her to be a good Spirit, her Diſcourſe was ſo Heavenly. Her two great Errands were to comfort Mrs. *Bargrave* in her Affliction, and to ask her Forgiveneſs for her Breach of Friendſhip, and with a Pious Diſcourſe to encourage her. So that after all, to ſuppoſe that Mrs. *Bargrave* could hatch ſuch an Invention as this from *Friday-Noon*, till *Saturday-Noon*, (ſuppoſing that ſhe knew of Mrs. *Veal*'s Death the very firſt Moment) without jumbling Circumſtances, and without any Intereſt too; ſhe muſt be more Witty, Fortunate and Wicked too, than any indifferent Perſon, I dare ſay, will allow. I asked Mrs. *Bargrave* ſeveral times, *If ſhe was ſure ſhe felt the Gown.* She anſwered modeſtly, 'If my Senſes be 'to be relied on, I am ſure of it. I asked her, if ſhe 'heard a Sound, when ſhe clapt her Hand upon her 'Knee: She ſaid, ſhe did not remember ſhe 'did: And ſhe ſaid, ſhe appeared to be as much a 'Subſtance as I did, who talked with her. And 'I may, ſaid ſhe, be as ſoon perſuaded that your 'Apparition is talking to me now, as that I did 'not really ſee her; for I was under no manner of 'fear, and received her as a Friend, and parted with 'her as ſuch. I would not, ſays ſhe, give one 'Farthing to make any one believe it, I have no 'Intereſt in it; nothing but Trouble is intailed up'on me for a long Time, for ought I know; and 'had it not come to Light by Accident, it would 'never have been made publick. But now, ſhe ſays, 'ſhe will make her own private Uſe of it, and keep 'her ſelf out of the way as much as ſhe can. And ſo ſhe has done ſince. She ſays, 'She had a Gen'tleman who came Thirty Miles to her to hear 'the Relation; and that ſhe had told it to a

'Room

' Room full of People at a time. Several particular Gentlemen have had the Story from Mrs. *Bargrave*'s own Mouth.

This Thing has very much affected me, and I am as well ſatisfied, as I am of the beſt grounded Matter of Fact. And why we ſhould diſpute Matter of Fact, becauſe we cannot ſolve things, of which we can have no certain or demonſtrative Notions, ſeems ſtrange to me? Mrs. *Bargrave*'s Authority and Sincerity alone, would have been undoubted in any other Caſe.

Conſolations

THE CHRISTIAN's Conſolations Againſt the Fears of DEATH.

CHAP. I.

That there is nothing more Dreadful than Death, to ſuch as have no Hope in GOD.

AN inſpir'd Pen ſtiles Death very ſignificantly, *The King of Terrors*; that is to ſay, the moſt terrible of all other things. For there is nothing that we can imagine in the World more dreadful and more frightful than Death. 'Tis poſſible to decline the edge of drawn Swords, to cloſe the Lions Jaws, to quench the Fires Fury, but when Death ſhoots its poiſon'd Arrows, when it opens its infernal Pit, and when it ſends forth its devouring Flames, 'tis altogether impoſſible to ſecure our ſelves; impoſſible 'tis to guard our ſelves from its mercileſs fury. There is an infinite number of warlike Inventions, by which we commonly defeat the Evil Deſigns of the moſt powerful and dreadful Enemies; but there is no Stratagem of the moſt Renowned General; no Fortifications ever ſo Regular and Artificial, nor Army ever ſo Victorious,

that can retard but for a moment the approaches of Death, this last Enemy. In the twinkling of an Eye it flies through the strongest Bulwarks, the deepest Walls, and the most prodigious Towers. It leaps over the largest Ditches, the highest Castles, and the most inaccessible Rocks. It blows down the strongest Barricadoes, and laughs at all our Military Trenches, every where it finds the weakness of our Armour, and through the best temper'd Breast-plates, it strikes the proudest Hearts. In the darkest Dungeon it comes to us and snatches us out of the hands of our most trusty and watchful Guards. In a word, Nature and Art can furnish us with nothing able to protect us from Death's cruel and insatiable Hands.

There is none so barbarous but is sometimes overcome by the Prayers and Tears of such as cast themselves upon their Knees to implore Mercy; nay, such as have lost all sense of Humanity and Goodness, commonly spare in their Rage the weakest Age and Sex. But unmerciful Death hath no more regard of such as humble themselves, than of others that resist and defy her. It takes no notice of Infants Tears and Cries, it plucks them from the Breasts of their tender-hearted Mothers, and crushes them in pieces before their Eyes. It scorns the Lamentations of dainty Dames, and delights to trample upon their most ravishing Beauties. It stops its Ears to the Requests of trembling old Age, and casts to the Ground the gray Heads, as so many wither'd Oaks.

At a Battle, when Princes and Generals of the Enemies Army are taken Prisoners, they are not treated as common Soldiers; but unmerciful Death treads under feet as audaciously, the Subject as the Prince, the servant as the Master, the Noble and the Vassal, the beging *Lazarus* and the rich *Abraham* together. It blows out with the same blast, the most glorious Illuminaries and the most loathsome Lamps. It hath no more respect for the Crowns of Kings, the Pope's Mitre, and the Cardinal's Caps than for the Shepherd's Crook, or

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the Slave's Chains. It heaps them all together, ſhuts them in the ſame Dungeon, and in the ſame Mortar pounds them to Powder.

There is no War never ſo furious and bloody, but is interrupted with ſome days, or at leaſt, ſome hours of Ceſſation and Truce: Nay, the moſt inhumane Minds are at laſt tired with bloody Conqueſts, but inſatiable Death never ſaith 'tis enough. At every hour and moment it cuts down whole Nations and Kindreds. The Fleſh of all the Animals that have lived and died ſince the Creation of the World, hath not been able to glut this devouring Monſter.

All Warfare is doubtful, he that wins the Victory to day, may ſoon after be put to flight. He that rides at preſent in a triumphing Chariot, may become the Footſtool of his Enemy. But Death is always victorious; it Triumphs with an inſufferable Inſolence over all the Kings and Nations of the Earth; it never returns to its Den but loaden with Spoils and glutted with Blood. The ſtrongeſt *Sampſons*, and and the moſt victorious *Davids*, who have torn in pieces and overcome Lions, Bears, and cut off the Heads of Giants, have at laſt yielded themſelves, and been cut off by Death. The great *Alexander*, and the triumphing *Cæſars*, who have made all the World to tremble before them, and conquered moſt part of the habitable Earth, could never find any thing that might protect them from Death's Power. When magnificent Statues and ſtately Trophies were rais'd to their Honour, Death laught at their Vanity, and made ſport with their Perſons. The rich Marbles, where ſo many proud Titles are Engraven, cover nothing but a little rotten Fleſh and a few Bones, which Death hath broken and reduc'd to Aſhes.

We read in the Revelation of the Prophet *Daniel*, that King *Nebuchadnezzar* ſaw in a Dream a large Statue of Gold, both Glorious and Terrible; *Its Head was of pure Gold, its Breaſt and Arms were of Silver, its Belly and Thighs of Braſs, its Legs of Iron, and its Feet were partly of Clay and partly of Iron.* As the Prince

was beholding it with Astonishment, a little Stone cut out of a Mountain, without Hands, was roll'd against the feet of this prodigious Statue, and broke it all to pieces; not only the Clay and the Iron were broken, but also the Gold, the Silver, and the Brass; all became as the Chaff, which Wind blows to and fro. This great Image represents the four universal Monarchies of the World; that of *Babylon*, of the *Persians* and *Medes*, of the *Greeks*, and that of the *Romans*. It represents also the Vanity and Unconstancy of all things under the Sun. For what is the Pomp, the Glory, the Strength and Dignities of this World, but as a Smoak driven with the Wind, and, a Vapour that soon vanishes away? All is like a Shadow that flies from us, or like a Dream that disappears in an instant. Man created in the Image of God, at his first appearance, seems to be very glorious for a while, and becomes terrible. But as soon as Death strikes at his Earthly part, and begins to break his Flesh and Bones, all the Glory, Pomp, Power and Magnificence of the richest, of the most terrible and victorious Monarchs are chang'd into a loathsome Smell, into contemptible Dust, and reduc'd to nothing; *Vanity of vanities, all is Vanity.*

Since therefore Death is so impartial as to spare none, and its Power so great that none can escape or resist it, 'tis no wonder if it is become so terrible, and fills with fear, grief and despair the Minds of all Mortals who have not settled their Faith and Assurance upon God. For there is no condemned Prisoner but trembles when he beholds the Scaffold erecting, upon which he is designed to be broken upon a Wheel, or when he spies in the Fire the Irons with which he is to be pinch'd to Death.

In the midst of a sumptuous Feast, *Belshazzar* saw the fingers of a Man's hand, writing these words upon the Wall of his Palace, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, which the Prophet *Daniel* hath thus interpreted, *Mene, God hath numbred*

numbred thy Kingdom, and finiſhed it; Tekel, thou art weighed in the Balance, and art found wanting; Perez or *Upharſin, Thy Kingdom is divided and given to the* Medes *and* Perſians. As ſoon as this great Monarch had caſt his Eyes upon this miraculous Writing, it is ſaid, that his Countenance was chang'd and his Thoughts troubled him, ſo that the joints of his Loins were looſed, and his Knees ſmote one againſt another. Certainly, the proud Worldling hath a greater cauſe to be diſmayed in the midſt of his Glory, and Pleaſures, when he may perceive Death writing upon every Wall of his Houſe inviſible characters, and printing upon his Forehead, that *God hath numbred his Days*, and this in which he now breaths, ſhall be ſoon followed by an Eternal Night; that *God hath weighed him in the Balance of his Juſtice, and found him as light as the Wind*; and that the Almighty Creator, unto whom Vengeance belongs, will ſoon diveſt him of all his Glory and Riches to cloath therewith his Enemies. What Comforts can be found for the wretched Sinners, who do not only underſtand their final Sentence, but alſo hear the thundring Voice of the great Judge of the World, exaſperated by their Impieties? They may now perceive Hell prepared to ſwallow them up, and the fiery Chains of that doleful Priſon ready to embrace them. They may at preſent feel the Hands of the Executioner of Divine Juſtice, that ſeizeth upon them already, and ſee themſelves before ſtretch'd and tortur'd in that place, where there ſhall be nothing but weeping and horrible gnaſhing of Teeth. At preſent they may feel the fierce approaches of that Fire and Brimſtone which is the ſecond Death, for it may juſtly be ſaid of theſe wretched Varlets, *That Hell comes to them before they go to Hell*; and that in this Life they have a Pre-ſentiment of the grievous Pangs of their future Torments. Therefore ſome of them in Deſpair, offer Violence to themſelves, and commit an horrid Murder upon their own Perſons, as if they were afraid not to die by a Hand wicked enough. The expectation

of Death to them, is more unsufferable than Death it self, and they had rather cast themselves into the bottomless pit of Hell, than endure the Apprehensions and fears of Hell in their guilty Consciences; And to be delivered of the flashes of Hell Fire than to mount up their Souls in this Life, they cast themselves in a brutish manner into that unquenchable Burning.

That which is most terrible, is that the horrid and unsufferable fears that seize upon the Wicked, are not short and transitory; for as a Criminal that knows there is a Sentence of Doom pronounced against him, continually thinks upon those Torments, that are preparing for him: assoon as he hears the Door unlocking, or a Fly buzzing about his Ears, he imagines, that some are entring to drag him from his Prison to Execution. In some sense he desires what he apprehends, and hastens the approaches of that which he wishes and cannot avoid. Thus desperate Sinners that know there's a Sentence of eternal Death proclaim'd against them in the Court of the King of Kings, and that from this Sentence there is no Appeal nor Escape, must needs be in continual Fears. Such foresee the fearful image of Death, that disturbs their Quiet, and as St. *Paul* expresseth himself, *Through fear of Death they are all their life-time subject to bondage*, Heb. 2. That is, they are all like so many wretched Slaves that daily tremble under the unhuman Power of a mercileſs Tyrant.

I know that there be some Atheists, who talk of Death with Contempt or Scorn, and who make an open profession of braving Death without the least sense of Fear; nevertheless they feel in their Souls some secret Thorns, with which Death often gauls them; some Fears and Apprehensions with which it tortures and disquiets them, when they dream least of her. It is true, they for the most part boast of not fearing the approaches of Death, and laugh at it when they imagine that she is at a distance from them; but

but theſe are they who are moſt apt to tremble at the near and grim countenance of Death, and ſooneſt diſcover their Weakneſs and Deſpair.

If there be any that ſeem to laugh at Death, their laughter is only in appearance upon the Lips. They are like a Child newly born, that ſeems to ſmile when 'tis inwardly tormented in the Bowels; or like thoſe that eat of the famous Herb mentioned by the Herbaliſts, which cauſeth a pleaſant laughter to appear upon the Lips of ſuch, into whoſe noble parts it conveys a mortal Poiſon, that kills them.

There be ſome, I confeſs that die without any concern; but theſe are either brutiſh or ſenſeleſs Perſons, much like unto a ſleeping Drunkard, who may be caſt down a Precipice, without any Knowledge or foreſight of the Danger; or they be pleaſant mockers, who are like the fooliſh Criminals that go merrily to the Gallows; or they be ſuch as are full of Rage and Fury, whom I may very well compare to an enraged wild Boar, that runs himſelf into the Huntſman's Snare: Such Monſters of Men deſerve not to be reckoned amongſt rational and underſtanding Creatures.

CHAP. II.

That in all Heathen Philoſophy, there is no ſolid or true Comforts againſt the Fears and Apprehenſions of Death.

THere are certain Empyricks that ſeem at the firſt Diſcourſe to be very well skil'd in their Art, that talk of Diſeaſes, and their Cauſes moſt learnedly and acutely; and nevertheleſs in their Practice

they are both unhappy and ignorant. Their unseasonable Learning disturbs the Patient more than their Physick eases him; and increases the Sufferings of the languishing Body. These kind of Physicians very well describe to us, in this particular, the Properties of the Heathen Philosophers. For when they represent the Calamities of our humane Condition, they sharpen their Wits, and discover all their Skill and Rhetorick. Some of them laugh ingeniously at our Miseries, others artificially weep to behold them. But in all their Writings and tragick Expressions, we find not any solid and sincere Comforts, to strengthen us against the Apprehensions of Death. Therefore their contemptible and vain Fancies oblige us to tell them, as *Job* his troublesome Friends, *Your Remembrances are like unto Ashes, your Bodies to Bodies of Clay*, Job 13. 'Tis true, some of these Learned Philosophers have very well spoken, that we begin to die as soon as we begin to breath, that our Life is like unto a Candle that lives by its Consumpion whereof the Flame devours and consumes it. For the natural heat that entertains our Life, insensibly undermines it; 'tis that which spends our radical moisture, that yields the same benefits to our Life, as Oyl to a Lamp, or Wax to a Taper.

Others have as well said, that our present Life is but a swift Race from one Mother to another. They meant from the Womb of our Mothers that brought us into the World, into the Womb and Bosom of the Earth that will receive us at last. For as soon as we are born we run a swift Race towards our Grave. At that instant when we fly from Death, we approach insensibly towards it, and contrary to our Intention, we cast our selves into its embraces. Some of the same School have compared Man to a bubble upon the Water, that rises and swells, and immediatly decreases and breaks. Others make him like to the wateriſh Bottles of divers Colours, that Children blow with their breath, and destroy with the same. In truth, all Man's Beauty

ty is but a vain appearance, that vaniſhes away in an inſtant; Iſai. 40. *All fleſh is like graſs, and all the glory of Man like the Flower of the Field*, 1 Pet. 1.

One of theſe great Philoſophers being ask'd what the Life of Man was, anſwered never a Word, becauſe ſuch a Queſtion deſerved none, or rather becauſe he would imitate the cuſtom of his Age, of ſpeaking by gueſs, and ſymbolick repreſentations. For that purpoſe he entred into a Chamber, and paſt out again at the ſame inſtant to ſignify to his Diſciples that queſtioned him, how that Man's Life is but an entrance in, and egreſs out of the World, the one ſucceeds immediately the other.

Another of the ſame Sect walk'd in a Bravado two or three turns, and then ſhrunk into a Pit, to ſhew that our Life is but a kind of Maſquerade, a vain appearance, that ſoon vaniſhes; when Men have well admired themſelves in their Splendor, and have drawn to them the looks and eſteem of the World, Death ſurpriſes them, ſpoils all their Luſtre, and covers their borrow'd Glory in a mournful Grave. 'Tis with us as with Actors in a Comedy, the one repreſents a King, the other an Emperour; the one a Counſellor, the other a Miniſter of State; but when the Comedy is ended, and the Garments chang'd, you know not which is which. We are like Counters upon a Table, ſome ſignifie Unites, others Tens, others Hundreds, and others Thouſands and Millions, but when they are ſhuffled together, and put again into the Purſe, the vaſt difference appears no more. This is a lively Image of all Mankind, for in this Life ſome appear upon a Throne, others are ſeated upon a Dunghil, ſome flouriſh in Golden and Silken Attire, others are cloathed with Nakedneſs; ſome Command as Princes, others ſubmit as Gally Slaves; ſome are fed with exquiſite Dainties, others muſt be content with the Bread of Affliction. But when Death hath caſt them all into their Graves together, then they appear without any Diſtinction.

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All these witty Expressions, and others of the like nature, are pleasant and true, they teach well, and flatter the Fancy, but they afford no real Comforts. Therefore to all these Learned Doctors, we may say as *Job* by the way of reproach to his Friends that added sorrow to his Affliction, *You are all Physicians of no value, How then Comfort ye me in vain ?* Job 13. 9. When a Patient is afflicted with the Tortures of an unmerciful Gout, or of the Stone in the Kidneys, that forceth from him at every moment, most grievous sighs and groans; if any should offer to Paint before him his looks and grimaces, or should counterfeit them ingeniously in his presence, he would bring him little ease to his Torments, or rather encrease to his Vexation and Trouble. The most beautiful Flower also can give no delight to such as are rack'd in the Executioners hands, or tied to four Horses that are ready to Tear him in Pieces. Thus 'tis with the most eloquent and florid Descourse; it can bring no Comfort to a Soul that is Departing, *David's* Harp alone can drive away the evil Spirits and appease the troubles of a wounded Conscience.

But some may imagine in this general survey of the wise Follies and Vanity of the Heathen Philosophers, I should except the Stoicks, I confess, in this particular, who express more gravity, but they Proceed with no better success; nay, when I have well considered them, I find them to be far more unsufferable, and more impertinent than the rest. For besides that, they treat of the immortality of the Soul, in a very doubtful and unconstant manner, the pretended Comforts that they offer, render Death more dreadful.

They tell us, that Death is the end and centre where all humane Afflictions and Miseries cease; therefore 'tis rather to be desired, than avoided or fear'd. They might have some colourable reason for this conclusion if they did but discover beyond the Grave, an happiness which they might now expect and hope for. Death assures them of no other Comfort, but only to

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put a period to all the Miſeries of this wretched Life. Therefore ſuch kind of Diſcourſes are not properly Comforts, and the reſolution that they beget in us, is but a ſilly Paſſion, much like that of a Criminal upon the Rack, who impatiently wiſhes for Death, that he might be delivered from the cruel hands of the Executioners ; and longs to be out of theſe Torments, to get on the Scaffold where he is to be broken upon the Wheel : O miſerable Wretch ! the change of Tortures will bring no eaſe to thy Pains. If thou canſt not endure patiently the Ropes that unjoint thy Limbs how wilt thou ſuffer the Bar of Iron that ſhall crack all thy Bones in pieces ? O blind Philoſopher ! If thou canſt not bear the Miſeries of this Life, how wilt thou endure the Agonies of Death ?

Moreover, they tell us, that the moſt cruel and painful Death is a noble occaſion to exerciſe our Vertue, and to cauſe our Conſtancy and Reſolution to appear with Admiration. This Diſcourſe ſeems to be plauſible, but in reality 'tis nothing but Wind ; for what availeth this apparent Vertue ; it hinders us not from falling into the deepeſt Abyſs of Torment and miſery, but periſheth and dies with its Idolaters. Therefore, ſuch as have moſt admired it, have at laſt acknowledg'd it to be but a Shadow; witneſs that famous and worthy General who fanſied, that his Virtue wou'd procure to him the Victory over all the Enemies of the Roman Common-wealth, in whoſe quarrel he took up Arms. When the Battel was loſt, and all his ambitious hopes had deceiv'd him, being ready to ſtab himſelf with his own Sword, he cried out, *Oh miſerable Vertue, what art thou but a vain and an unprofitable Word, a Name without a Body ?* He thus exclaimed againſt his Vertue, that he had formerly adored, becauſe it could yield him no Comfort in the Day of his Diſtreſs, nor free him from falling into utter deſpair.

The moſt ordinary and uſual Comforts they commonly bring, are theſe : That Death is inevitable ; that we all enter into the World upon condition to

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go out; that we have as much cause to be Afflicted with the day of our Birth, as with the Day of our Death; that Humanity and Immortality are not consistent; that Death is a Tribute we all owe to Nature; that the Kings, and greatest Monarchs are forc'd to pay it, as well as the meanest Subjects; and that this is such an universal Law, that it admits of no exception.

But these kind of Comforts encrease our trouble and add to our Affliction. I have therefore good reason to speak to these grave Philosophers in *Job*'s language to his troublesome Friends, *Miserable Comforters are ye all.* For in truth, they don't only search the Wound to the quick, without any application of an healing Plaister, but they also tear and widen it, inflame and render it far more grievous. When we are in hopes of seeing an end to our Calamities, our mind is comforted, and arms it self with Constancy and a patient Resolution; but when we see our selves cast into an Abyss of Evil, and that no hopes appear of getting out, we are then over-whelmed with grief and despair; 'Tis a lamentable thing to be born to die, but 'tis far more lamentable and grievous to know that Death is not to be avoided, that all the Treasures of the World cannot free us from it. For his Affliction is the greatest, whose Misery cannot be cur'd.

This also is a false and a deceitful Maxim, that the comfort of the miserable is to have companions in misery. Tho' many Thousands drink together of the waters of *Marah*, they seem no less bitter. And altho' thou shouldst be burnt in a Fire where many are consumed, thou shalt not find there a more easy abode. Thy Neighbours Grief does not lessen thy Affliction; their Sickness cannot restore to thee Health; and their Death comfort thee against the approaches of thine own. On the contrary, if thou hast any sense of Humanity, thou wilt weep for their Misery and thine together. 'Tis that which great *Xerxes*, King of *Persia*, Practis'd; for upon Review of his numerous Army, in which there were 1100000 Men,

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he conſidered, that within an hundred Years, ſo many brave Captains and Soldiers would be rotting in their Graves, he was moved with Compaſſion, and wept. I mention not here the brutiſh and fooliſh opinion of ſuch as imagine that Man's Soul is mortal, and periſhes with the Body. This conſideration brings no Comfort, but caſts us into an irrecoverable deſpair. For beſides the Torments of Hell Fire, there is nothing that can be imagined more dreadful, than a reducement to a Non-Entity.

'Tis alſo needleſs to mention the *Platoniſts*; who have diſcourſed of the Soul's Immortality, and of its Bleſſedneſs after this Life. They imagine themſelves very acute and ſubtile, but their diſcourſes of this matter, are ſo groſs and extravagant, that inſtead of perſwading the Truth, they expoſe it to ſcorn and contempt. Let their fond and imaginary deſcriptions of the *Elyſian* Fields, be witneſſes. For whatſoever they have invented of this kind, hath been reckon'd amongſt the Fables and Poetical Fictions. Thoſe Chymerical Gardens under Ground, contain nothing like to the Divine Excellencies and unſpeakable pleaſures of the Paradiſe of God.

In a word, ſeek amongſt the rareſt and moſt precious Treaſures of Wit and Learning of the Heathen Antiquity; turn over the Writings of the moſt Eloquent Orators, of the ſubtleſt Philoſophers, of the moſt famous Poets; examine the Secrets of the moſt experienced Phyſicians, conſider their Practice, and all the Remedies they preſcribe to the Soul, and you ſhall find them too unskillful to perform the leaſt Cure. They do but charm and flatter the Diſeaſe, they harden us againſt evil; they furniſh us with a good exterior, and teach us to bear a good Mein, but they have no real antidote againſt the Venom, that kills the Principle of Life, nor Remedy that reaches to the Heart. And as the Torrents, that dry up in the hotteſt Seaſons, ſuch Conſolations, that flow not

not from the Fountain of Life, vanish away without effect, and dry up to nothing, when a deep sorrow, fear and affliction seize upon a sinful Soul.

It seems, the Compilers of the Heathen Religion, were sensible of this Truth. For they dedicated Temples, and erected Altars to all manner of Gods and Goddesses; not only to Vertues and Health, but also to Vices and Diseases, to Fear, Cowardice, Anger, the Fever, the Pestilence, and an infinite more, but they left Death out of their Devotions. This is an open Declaration, that they knew not how to strike acquaintance with Death, and win its esteem and favour. They had no Sacrifices nor Incense that could allay its fury; they look'd upon it as their most inhuman and unreconcileable Enemy. The very name of Death terrifi'd them, therefore 'twas one of their most unfortunate Omens. *Adrian* the Emperor is witness of what I say. He was one of the greatest Princes in former Ages, he had made most part of the habitable World yield to his Scepter, and put to Death an infinite number of Men; but at last he trembled, and was astonished himself at the approaches of Death; He had overcome the most barbarous Nations, and tam'd the most savage Beasts; but when he came to this last Enemy, he had no Weapons fit for the Encounter. Therefore in this occasion he discovers the weakness and unconstancy of his Mind, far more disturb'd than his Body was with the Disease. Sometimes he employ'd the Magick Art to retard Death; sometimes he made use of his Sword and Poison to hasten it; at last he kill'd himself by an abstinence from Food necessary to entertain his Life. He had conquer'd all the World, and given Peace and Happiness to his Empire; but he could not overcome himself, or appease the troubles of his Conscience. He was so far from quieting the disturb'd Thoughts of his Soul, that he suffer'd himself to be overwhelmed with despair; he flatter'd his Soul in hastening its ruine, for when his Disease gave him liberty to breathe, he talk'd

talk'd unto it on this manner, *My little Soul, my deareſt Companion, Thou art now going to wander in obſcure, cold and ſtrange places. Thou ſhalt never jeſt again according to thy wonted Manner; thou ſhalt never give me any more Sport or Pleaſure.*

You'll ſay *Adrian* was a powerful Monarch, but no great Philoſopher; perhaps he knew how to govern, and was well acquainted with the Politicks; but he was Ignorant of the Morals, and had no skill to die well. To anſwer this Objection, let us give an Example beyond all Exception.

Ariſtotle is generally eſteem'd to have been the ſubtileſt, and the moſt learn'd of the Heathen Antiquity, the Prince of all the Philoſophers, the Glory of his Age, and the Founder of his Sect. When his excellent Soul had ſurvey'd all things, examin'd the Heavens, ſearch'd among the Excellencies of the Earth, pried into all the Wonders of the World, and found out the rareſt Secrets of Nature; he could never find any ſolid Comforts againſt the Apprehenſions of Death. Notwithſtanding all his admirable Subtilties, and his profound Learning, the Fear of this cruel Death terrifies his Conſcience in ſuch a manner, that he confeſſed, *That of all terrible Things, Death was the moſt dreadful.*

CHAP. III.

Of divers ſorts of Death, with which we are to encounter.

WHen *David* had a deſign to fight with *Goliah*, and could not make uſe of the Armour of King *Saul*, he took a ſmooth Stone out of his Bag, caſt it with his Sling, ſtruck the *Philiſtine* in the Forehead, and brought down this proud Giant, who had defi'd the Armies of *Iſrael*. We have already examin'd and

and tried all the Armour of Human Wisdom and Learning, laid up in the Storehouses of the greatest Wits of former Ages, and we have found that they are not able to afford us any assistance in an encounter with Death. Let us therefore now see whether we may overcome this proud Enemy, with the Sling of our mystical *David*, with the Weapons of our Divine Shepherd. But before we begin the resistance, let us look and behold it in the face. The Enemy that I intend you should overcome, is a Monster with three Heads, for there are three sorts of Death, the Natural, the Spiritual, and the Eternal.

The Natural Death is a separation of the Soul from the Body; altho' our Body hath been fashioned with the Finger of God, 'tis but a weak and frail Vessel made of Earth; but our Soul is an Heavenly, Spiritual, and immortal Substance. 'Tis a Sparkle and a Ray of the Godhead, and the lively Image of our great Creator. For when God had made our first Parent, *He breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life*, Gen. 2. 7. that we might thereby understand, that our Souls alone, proceed from his immediate hand; therefore he is named the *Father of Spirits*, Heb. 12. and *The faithful Creator of Souls*, 1 Pet. 4. This Soul raises us a degree above all Animals, and above the Celestial Bodies, and renders us like the Angels of Heaven. 'Tis the Light that enlightens us, the Salt that preserves us from Corruption. In one word, by this Soul we live, enjoy our Sences, move and understand. As soon as this Angelical Guest leaves its Mansion, the Body, it loseth all its Beauty, and falls of it self into a state of ruine. For this Flesh that we are so careful of and feed with all manner of Dainties, then corrupts and rots. After that it hath been stretch'd a while upon Beds of Gold, and richly attired in Purple and Scarlet, 'tis cast upon a Bed of Worms, and covered with the vilest insects of the Earth. Notwithstanding all its former perfumes, it yields then a most horrid stink. Before it ravish'd

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the Eyes of the Beholders with its admirable Beauty, but now it becomes ſo odious and offenſive, that the living care not to ſee it; 'tis at laſt reduced to Aſhes, according to the Sentence that was pronounced in the Earthly Paradiſe, *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return.*

The Spiritual Death is the Separation of the Soul from God our Creator. For he being the Soul of our Souls, and the Light of our Life, as ſoon as we depart from this ſource of Light and Life, we fall into an Abyſs of Darkneſs and Death: *For all thoſe that depart from God ſhall periſh*, Pſ. 73. As the Members when they are cut off from the Body commonly rot, as the twig withers when 'tis ſeparated from the Vine: So in a Separation from God, we can neither live, move, nor have a Being. And as 'tis with the Body ſeparated from the Soul, it nouriſheth a Neſt of Worms that devour it, and ſends forth a moſt inſufferable ſtench: So 'tis with our Soul at a diſtance from God; it yields thoſe evil Affections that torment and conſume it, and the ill ſcent of its Crimes are offenſive to Heaven and Earth. Of this kind of Death our Saviour ſpeaks to the *Jews* in this manner; *If you do not believe that I am he you ſhall die in your ſins*, John 8. And to the Angel of the Church at *Sardis*, *Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt and art dead*, Rev. 3. This ſame Death St. Paul mentions in the ſecond Chapter of the *Coloſſians*, and the ſecond of the *Epheſians*. *When we were dead in our treſpaſſes and ſins, God hath quickned us together with Chriſt.* And elſewhere he exhorts a ſinful Man, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the Dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light*, Epheſians 5. And 'tis of the ſame kind of Death that St. *Paul* ſpeaks concerning the Wanton Widow that *ſhe is dead while ſhe liveth*, 1 *Tim.* 5.

It was this kind of Death that *Adam* suffered as soon as he had tasted of the forbidden Fruit, according to God's Threatning; *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die the Death.* For not only his Body became subject to Death, but his Soul also was cast into the Death of Sin, and enslaved to Corruption. It happened to him as to a Lamp newly put out, the snuff yields a most ill-savour'd scent.

As the life of Grace is a Preparative to the Life of Glory, and furnisheth us with a fore-taste of the Heavenly Joys: So on the contrary, the Spiritual Life is as it were the Suburbs of Hell, 'tis the first beginning of an eternal Death, and the entrance into the infernal Pit. The eternal Death is nothing else but an entire and irrecoverable Separation of the Soul and Body from God, accompanied with infinite Torments; Torments indeed, unto which all the sufferings of this mortal Life are light and inconsiderable: nevertheless, as the Spirit of God represents the Heavenly Joys and Felicities by things that are most pleasant and delightful; thus to express to us Hells Torments, it borrows things that are the most dreadful and painful in this Life. We are told of an *Abyss* or *Furnace full of Flames, a bottomless Pit burning with fire and brimstone.* The Scripture mentions, *Chains of darkness*, an *Eternal Night*, and an *Hell Fire, where there are weeping and gnashing of Teeth.* It tells *us, that* Tophet *is ordained of old, yea, for the King 'tis prepared, he hath made it deep and large, the pile thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord, like a stream of Brimstone doth kindle it*, Isaiah 30. 33.

Fansie to your selves a Man devoured with Worms, burning in hot Flames, in continual Torments, in whose wounds kindled Brimstone is poured without Intermission, with boyling Lead and burning Pitch; and if there be any other Pains more sharp and grievous, fansie it also. All this will give us but a light and imperfect image of the State of Hell, for all the pangs of the Body are nothing in comparison to the Horrors,

Troubles,

Troubles, and incredible Griefs, that ſhall for ever rack and torture the damned Souls.

As Shame aggravates our ſufferings, and renders them more terrible, the damned ſhall be loaden with Shame and Infamy for all Eternity; their Names ſhall be hateful to God and his Holy Angels, and they ſhall be curſed with an endleſs Curſe. And as 'tis an increaſe to our Torment to ſuffer in the Company of abominable Varlets, and to become a Companion of the moſt infamous Raſcals; they ſhall ſuffer with Hell's Executioner, and ſhall be ſent to the Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. All their Senſes ſhall ſhare in theſe horrid Torments, they ſhall be cruſht in the *Wine-preſs* of God's Eternal Wrath, and they ſhall feel for ever and ever, the ſtroaks of God's Vengeance, and of his Almighty Hand. They ſhall then learn by Experience what a terrible thing 'tis to fall into the Hands of the living God, and how unſufferable that Fire is that ſhall conſume his Enemies. Their Eyes ſhall perceive nothing but the bottomleſs Pit, the Devil's Image, and the Furies of Hell; their Ears ſhall hear nothing but the horrible Outcries and fearful Roarings of the tormented Devils, and damned Souls. They ſhall be choak'd with the noiſome ſmell and fumes of the bottomleſs Pit; they ſhall then drink the very dregs and bottom of God's Anger and Indignation, and they ſhall ſuck the Venom of his Arrows. *Fire and Brimſtone ſhall be the portion of their Cup*, Pſal. 11.

The Sufferings of this Life are but ſhort, and for a moment, but the Torments of the damned ſhall never end; *Their worm dieth not, and their fire ſhall never be quenched*, Mark 9. Rev. 20. They ſhall be tormented day and night to all Eternity. When they ſhall have ſuffered as many thouſand Ages as there be drops of Water in the Sea, or grains of Sand on the Shore; it ſhall be but the beginning of their Grief. They ſhall live for ever to die continually, and they ſhall die and never be conſum'd. In the midſt of theſe hot flames, they ſhall beg a drop of Water to cool their Tongue, *Luke* 16, but

we may ſay of this Fire that ſhall torture the damned, what the Spouſe in the *Canticles* ſaith of the divine love that had enflamed her Soul, *Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the flouds drown it*, Cant. 8. And St. *Paul* tells us, *that the things that God hath prepared for them that love him, Eye hath not ſeen, Ear hath not heard, nor did it ever enter into the heart of Man*, 1 Cor. 2. So on the contrary we may ſay, that thoſe things that God hath prepared for them that hate him, *Eye hath not ſeen, Ear hath not heard, nor did it ever enter into the heart of Man.* From hence ſhall proceed their Rage, Madneſs and Deſpair; they ſhall cry in *Cain's* Language, *My puniſhment is greater than I can bear*, Gen. 4. when they ſhall ſee nothing but an extream Miſery and woful darkneſs they ſhall curſe God, the King of all Creatures, *Iſa.* 8. In their fury and rage they will eat their Tongues, and blaſpheme the great God of Heaven and Earth. It had been far better for ſuch Perſons, that they had never been born; therefore they ſhall ſeek Death, and ſhall not find it, *Matth* 26. They ſhall deſire to die, that is, to be reduc'd to nothing, *Rev.* 9. But this Death ſhall fly from them; who of you *can dwell in everlaſting burning?* Iſa, 33. who of us can dwell in eternal Flames? *Rev.* 6. If the Vials and little Cups full of God's Wrath, force the Wicked to cry out, how much more ſhall the Rivers and the Ocean, of God's Vengeance draw from them, *O mountains fall upon us, O rocks, cover us, and hide us from the face of him that ſits upon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the day of his anger is come, and who may abide it?* Prov. 1. But as they have ſtopt their Ears to God's Gracious calls, and hardned their Hearts, to his invitations to Repentance, God ſhall alſo ſtop his Ear to their Outcry's and his Eyes to their grievous Sufferings; and when they ſhall be overcome with Fear and Deſpair, God will ſcorn and mock at their inſufferable Miſery.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That Jeſus Chriſt our Lord hath redeemed us from Eternal Death, and by degrees reſcues us from a Spiritual Death.

WE read in the fifth Chapter of the Revelations of St. *John*, That he wept bitterly, becauſe no Being in Heaven and Earth, nor under the Earth was able to open the Book ſealed with ſeven Seals, that was in God's Right Hand. At that inſtant, one of the 24 Elders ſpake to him, *Weep not, behold the Lion of the Tribe of* Juda *overcome to open the Book, and to looſe the ſeven Seals.* Thus we have until now wept bitterly becauſe we could find no Body in the Armies of *Iſrael*, to encounter with that powerful Monſter Death. But let us alſo wipe our Tears, and take good Courage, my beloved; for this ſame Lion of the Tribe of *Juda* is appointed to fight with this dreadful Enemy: Our Victorious and Triumphing *David*, who, hath torn in pieces the infernal Lion, bruiſed the Ancient Serpent's Head, and *ſpoiled principalities and powers triumphing over them in his Croſs*, Col. 2. 15. 'Tis he that hath undertaken this glorious Combat; 'twas for that purpoſe that he left for a while the Throne of God the Father, and the Company of his Holy Angels, 1 *Sam.* 17. 'Twas for that intent that he came into the Camp and Confuſion of *Iſrael*. He hath not borrowed the Weapons and aſſiſtance of the World, *Heb.* 2. All that he hath taken from us, is our frail Nature. But he *hath armed himſelf with Righteouſneſs, as with a breaſt-plate, and hath put on the Helmet of ſalvation. He hath cloathed himſelf with vengeance as with a Cloak, he hath alone trodden, the Wine preſs, and no body hath aſſiſted him*, Iſa. 59. 63. But his Arm hath ſaved him, and his Hand hath upheld him. As *David* cut off *Goliah's* Head with his own Sword, Jeſus Chriſt

hath overcome Death by Death. Like unto the ſtrong *Sampſon*, he hath deſtroyed all the Enemies of his Glory by his Death, 1 *Sam.* 17. He hath overcome in dying, him who had the Empire of Death; that is, the Devil, *Heb.* 2. and hath delivered them, *who through fear of Death were all their life-time ſubject to bondage*, then was fulfilled this ſaying of *Hoſea*, *O Death, I will be thy plague, O Grave, I will be thy deſtruction*, Hoſ. 13. And that of *Iſaiah*, *he will ſwallow up Death in Victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all Faces, and the rebuke of his People ſhall be taken away from off all the Earth*, Iſaiah 25. 1 Tim. 6. This Bleſſed Prince King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only hath Immortality, and dwelleth in an inacceſſible Light, hath deſtroyed Death and brought to light Life and Immortality by the Goſpel, 1 *Tim.* 1. *O Death, where is thy Victory? O Grave where is thy Sting? The ſting of Death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law; but Bleſſed be God who hath given us the Victory by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 15.

This great God and Saviour has perfectly redeemed us from Eternal Death, as he himſelf teaches us in the Goſpel of St. *John*, *He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting Life and ſhall not come into Condemnation, but is paſſed from Death unto Life*, Chap. 5. 24. *I am the living bread which came down from Heaven, if any Man eat of this bread, he ſhall live for ever*, Chap. 6. 51. v. 40. *Your Fathers did eat Manna in the Wilderneſs, and are dead, that is, the bread which cometh down from Heaven, that a Man may eat thereof and not die*, Chap. 8. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, if any Man keep my word, he ſhall never taſte of Death. I am the Reſurrection and the Life, he that lives and believeth in me ſhall never die, and he that believeth in me, although he were dead, yet ſhall he live*, Chap. 11. The wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is Eternal Life thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Bleſſed and Holy is he that hath part in the firſt Reſurrection. *Rev.* 20. The ſecond Death ſhall never have any Power, upon him.

him. In one Word, the Gates of Hell, that is to ſay, Death, cannot prejudice them who are ſettled upon Jeſus Chriſt the Rock of Eternity. This merciful Saviour hath alſo delivered us from the Spiritual Death, *Eph.* 2. For we being dead in our Treſpaſſes and Sins, he hath quickned us, and raiſed us up together unto newneſs of Life, *Coloſſ.* 2. He hath carried our Sins in his Body upon the Croſs, that he dying unto Sin, we might live unto Righteouſneſs. We are buried with him in his Death by Baptiſm, that as Jeſus Chriſt is raiſed from the dead by the Glory of God the Father, we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of Life, 1 *Peter* 2. *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and riſe from the Dead, and Jeſus Chriſt ſhall enlighten thee*, Rom. 6. For by his Death he hath not only reconciled us to God the Father *Eph.* 5. *Coloſſ.* 11. but he hath alſo procured to us the Holy Spirit, that creates in us a new Heart, and imprints the Image of his Holineſs, *Ezek.* 36. 2 *Cor.* 5. He makes us become new Creatures, and regenerates us by the uncorruptible Seed, 1 *Pet.* 1. This is that which the Scripture names the firſt Reſurrection, *Rev.* 20. St. *Peter* was raviſh'd in admiration at this great and wonderful Benefit; and therefore he acknowledged it. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead*, 1 Pet. 1. God diſcover'd to the Prophet *Ezekiel* a Field cover'd with dry Bones, and commanded him to Propheſie upon theſe Bones, *Ezek.* 37. At the Prophet's Command they began to draw near to one another, then the Nerves began to appear, the Fleſh to grow and to be covered with Skin, but there was no Life until God commanded the Prophet to Propheſie again, *Thus ſaith the Lord, Spirit, come from the four Winds, blow upon theſe Dead Bodies, and let them riſe from the Dead.* Then the Spirit entred into them, they began to revive, and they ſtood upon their Legs. This is the lively and true Image of the firſt Reſurrection. For the Spirit of God that blows whither

it liſteth, regenerates us by degrees, *John.* 3. and the new Man is created in our Hearts, by little and little, as the Child grows in its Mothers Womb.

When *Joſhua* brought the Children of *Iſrael* into the Land of Promiſe, he deſtroyed not all the *Canaanites*, Joſh. 23. there remained ſome who became Scourges in their Sides, and Thorns in their Eyes. Thus our true and ſpiritual *Joſhua*, who hath led us into the Kingdom of his Grace, hath not altogether deſtroyed all our evil Affections; ſome yet remain that are like prickles in our Sides, and like Swords that pierce thro' our Souls. They yet render our Life bitter and unpleaſant, therefore we often deſire Death to come and put a period to this Conflict. Sin was in poſſeſſion of us as a ſtrong Man armed in an Houſe; but Jeſus Chriſt is entred into our Souls, and become a Maſter; he hath therefore bound and chain'd Sin, and hath nail'd it to his Croſs. But this furious Beaſt, tho' it hath receiv'd a mortal Wound, and is ready to give up the laſt gaſp, it ſtruggles and foams within us. Our Bleſſed Saviour hath extinguiſh'd with the Red ſtream of his Blood, the infernal Flames of all our curſed Affections; but yet there remains in the Aſhes ſome Sparkles of this deviliſh Fire, that yet cauſe in us feveriſh Fits. Only this merciful Redeemer of his infinite goodneſs, hath looſed us from the Devil's Chains; but that we might have cauſe to be humble, to deſire the encreaſe of Grace, and long for the arrival of his Glory, he leaves about us ſome of the troubleſome Fetters: by his holy Spirit he files them off by degrees, but one day he will take them away from us.

At the voice of this Prince of Life, that reaches to the very bottom of our Hearts, we are riſen from the Sepulchre of our Vices with our Grave-Cloaths about us, as *Lazarus* when he came out of his Tomb. We are like the ancient Slaves that were ſet at Liberty; we bear upon our Foreheads the viſible marks of our ancient Bondage; but one day our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall cover theſe marks of infamy and Diſgrace with an heavenly Diadem.

Diadem. If you deſire another Image of our ſpiritual Condition, fanſie to your ſelves a dead Man caſt into a foul Pit or Sink, unto whom Life is reſtored in a moment; afterwards by degrees he is waſh'd and clean'd of the Filth that cover'd his Body. We were not only dead of a ſpiritual Death, but we were alſo overwhelmed in an Abyſs of Corruption and Filth. The Son of God hath pull'd us out of this Abyſs, and already reſtored us to Life; but the Dirt and Putrefaction with which we are disfigured, he waſhes away with the Waters of Grace, *Zach.* 13. *For there is a Fountain opened for ſin in the houſe of* David, *Iſa.* 4. in the which God hath promiſed to waſh away all the Filth of the Daughter of *Sion*, and all the Blood of *Jeruſalem*. And as it happened to the cruel King *Adonibezech*, when the Tribe of *Juda* took him Priſoner, he loſt the Thumbs of his Hands, and the great Toes of his Feet, but he ſuffered not Death until he came to *Jeruſalem*; Thus our great God and Saviour, the Prince of the Tribe of *Juda*, hath cut off the ſtrength and Power of the Old Man that tyrannized in our Souls, and hath deprived him of his venomous Nails, with which he wounded our Hearts; he hath alſo given him his mortal Wound, but he ſuffers him to enjoy a languiſhing Life; and will not take away his laſt Breath, until we bring him to the Gates of the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*.

But to ſpeak more openly, Sin is yet in us, but it reigneth not; for our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt hath broken its Sceptre and pull'd it from the Throne; and as he hath taken from it all Command in us, he conſtrains it to leave the poſſeſſion of our Souls by Degrees. As a ſtrong and mighty King, who having won the Battle, purſues and drives his Enemy, until he hath totally expell'd them out of his Kingdom; ſo doth our Saviour deal with Sin.

And as it happens with a Woman with Child in her old Age, there is in her Body two contrary Lives, that of the Mother, and that of the Child; the one de-

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cays and dies insensibly, the Child's Life, grows and encreaseth by degrees: So 'tis in the faithful and regenerate Soul; there are two Lives, that of Sin, that the Scripture names the Old Man, and that of the New Man, which is created according to God in Righteousness and true Holiness. The one diminishes and draws to its final End, but the other grows and gathers Strength until we arrive to the perfect Stature of our Lord Jesus Christ; the Spirit of God every day gets Ground of our Corruption and Weakness.

CHAP. V.

Why we are yet subjected to the Corporal or Natural Death, and what Advantage we thereby receive in Jesus Christ.

THE wise King teacheth us in the 9th of *Ecclesiastes, that the same Accident happens to all, to the Righteous and to the Wicked, to the Clean, and to the Polluted, to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not.* These Words are to be understood of the several Afflictions, unto which we are exposed during this mortal Life; but we may apply to the natural Death; for *'tis appointed unto all once to die, and after that the Judgment follows*, Heb. 9. By one Man Sin is entered into the World, and by Sin Death; and thus Death is come upon all Men, because they have all sinned, *Rom.* 5. Therefore when *Joshua* felt himself feeble and decaying, he told the Children of *Israel, That he was going the way of all Flesh*, Josh. 23. And *Job* complains unto God, *I know that thou will reduce me to Death, and to the house appointed for all living*, Job 20. 'Twas upon this Subject that the Royal Prophet was exercising his Meditation, when he cried out, *Who is he that liveth and shall not see Death, shall he free his Soul from the power of the Grave?*

Grave? Pſal, 89. And to ſpeak in the Language of *Solomon*, or *ever the ſilver cord be looſed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the Fountain, or the wheel broken at the ciſtern*: That is to ſay, The Backbone, where Marrow is as white as Silver, be looſed; when the Skull, which is like a precious Veſſel of Gold, be broken; when the *Vena Cava* receives no more Blood from the Liver, the Fountain of Life, when the Lights that draw in and puſh forth the Breath, move no more; or when the Kidneys that extract the Humidity from the Veins, and cauſe it to drop down into the Bladder, as into a Ciſtern, begin to fail, *then ſhall the Body return to the Earth, as it was, and the Spirit ſhall return unto God that gave it.*

To expreſs to us this inevitable Fate, *Moſes* reckons up all the Antient Fathers that have liv'd longeſt in the firſt World; he mentions ſome who lived 700, others 800, others 809 Years, and ſome near a Thouſand, *Gen.* 5. But when he had well ſpoken of their Deeds, and of the Children which they left behind, he adds in the Concluſion of all, and then ſuch a one died. Thus our Creator executes upon all Men, the Sentence once pronounced againſt *Adam*, the Father of all Mankind, *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return*, Gen. 3.

By this means God declares his Juſtice and Truth, and accompliſhed what was ſignified by the ancient Types, *Levit.* 14. For according to the Laws which God gave to *Iſrael* by *Moſes*, the Houſe that was infected with Leproſie was to be demoliſhed and caſt into a noiſome Place. There is a more urgent Cauſe for a Man's Body to be deſtroy'd, and laid in the Sepulchre, becauſe he was created to be the Palace of the living God, the dwelling of his Glory; but Sin, a kind of infectious Leproſie, hath inſinuated it ſelf, and disfigured it, hath entred the Skin, corrupted the Blood, diſordered the Spirits, crept into the Joynts and Marrow, and hath ſpread its venom in ſuch a manner, that there is none of our Members but is an Inſtrument of Iniquity and Unrighteouſneſs, *Rom.* 6.

For

For the ſame Reaſon, we cannot ſufficiently admire the difference that God hath put between the Veſſels that were clean, and ſuch as were unclean. For he commanded, that the earthen Veſſels infected ſhould be broken in pieces, *Levit.* 11. but that ſuch as were of a more valuable Subſtance, ſhould be only waſh'd with Water and purified with Fire, *Numb.* 11. The Commands and Laws of the great God are excellent Commentaries upon his Actions. Our Soul is like a Golden Veſſel, becauſe it is of a Spiritual and Heavenly Subſtance; therefore God doth not altogether deſtroy it, altho' it be infected with Sin, but cauſeth it to be waſhed and cleanſed at the Fountain of his infinite Mercy. He purifies it with the Blood of his Son, and cauſes it to paſs through the Fire of his Holy Spirit. But for this miſerable Body, an Earthly Veſſel and Tabernacle, he breaks it to pieces, and reduces it to Duſt and Aſhes. 'Tis my Judgment, that Death is an excellent Means to demonſtrate the infinite Power of our great God and Saviour; for the greater the Diſeaſe is, the more admirable is the Cure. Without doubt the Finger of God, and his infinite Power, is far more viſible in raiſing one Man from the dead than in preſerving many Thouſands alive.

As God is wont to Lighten out of Darkneſs, ſo he makes uſe of Death to cauſe his infinite Wiſdom to ſhine and appear in all his Creatures. Sin hath brought forth Death, and Death on the contrary, as a moſt fortunate Parricide, kills and deſtroys its Parent Sin; for 'tis Death that totally roots out of our Souls all corrupt Affections.

Moreover, God who is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever, *Heb*, 13. will have all his Children paſs through the ſame Path, to take Poſſeſſion of his Eternal Inheritance, and enter by the ſame Gate into his Royal Palace. All the faithful of the Old Teſtament are gone already this Way, *through many Tribulations*, Acts 24. they are arrived to the Kingdom of God and through Death they are come to the Abode of Life and Immortality,

tality. The Holy Scriptures that are inſpired of God tell us, That *the Rheubenites, and half of the Tribe of Manaſſes*, Num. 32 Joſh. 1. left their Dwellings, which they had beyond *Jordan*, to go over and fight in the Army of *Iſrael*, and did not offer to return until God had given Reſt to their Brethren, and put them into a peaceable Poſſeſſion of their Inheritances. If I may make ſome ſtop at ſuch an excellent Allegory, I may ſay that theſe Paſſages repreſent to us a lively Figure of the Faithful that die before the end of the World: For they leave their Bodies, the abode and dwellings of their Souls, and paſs through Death, as through another *Jordan*, into the Celeſtial *Canaan*, to encounter with God by their Prayers, in the Society of the Firſt-born, whoſe Names are regiſtred in Heaven, and they will not return again to their Bodies, until the Number of the Saints be compleat, until the Building of the Church be finiſhed, and until our great *Joſhua* hath introduced us into this Eternal Reſt, and put us in Poſſeſſion of the incorruptible Inheritances reſerved for us in Heaven. Then we ſhall not need to fight, but to enjoy peaceably the Fruits of our Victories, and to reſt for ever from our Labours. We ſhall have no cauſe to offer to God Prayers and Supplications but our Buſineſs ſhall be to ſing unto him Praiſes and Eternal Thankſgivings.

The moſt conſiderable Reaſon in my Judgment, of this our Deſtiny, is, That God hath predeſtinated us to be conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the Firſt-born among many Brethren, he will have us be Baptized with his Baptiſm, and drink in his Cup, and enter into Bliſs by the ſame Gate, through which he hath already paſs'd. Thro' Shame and Diſgrace he is arrived to Glory, and thro' Death he is entred into Life. He hath drunk of the bitter Waters, before he taſted of the River of Celeſtial Joys, and he is gone down into the Grave before he would mount up to the Right Hand of God.

Altho'

Altho' 'tis appointed unto all Men once to die, *Heb.* 9. I dare affirm that Death hath no cauſe to Triumph, becauſe the chief Advantage is not on that ſide. We read in the Book of *Eſther*, that King *Ahaſuerus* would not recal the Proclamation that he had ſet forth againſt the *Jews*, but he gave them full Liberty to take up Arms to defend themſelves, to attack their Enemies, and to make them ſuffer all the Miſchief they intended againſt them. I find ſomething like unto this Proceeding; for God would not call back the Sentence of Death pronounced againſt Mankind in the Garden of *Eden*; nevertheleſs he allows us, nay, he commands his true *Iſrael* to take up Arms againſt Death, to conquer and trample it under Feet.

In the firſt place, Jeſus Chriſt, our Head, hath encountred with Death, and overcome it, he hath purſued it into its Trenches, and baffled it in its own Fortification; Death thought to have devoured him, but it hath been devoured it ſelf. As the Fiſhes are taken by the Hook that they think to ſwallow; and as the Bees hurt thoſe whom they ſting, but do greater harm to themſelves; for they cauſe a preſent Pain in our Body, and a Heat that ſoon ceaſeth; but they prejudice themſelves more; for they break their ſtings and loſe thereby their Lives. Thus Death, by fixing its ſting in the Humanity of Jeſus Chriſt, hath put him to a great deal of Pain for a time, but it hath thereby loſt all Strength and Vigour for ever.

The Men of *Juda*, to ſatisfie the enraged *Philiſtines*, delivered into their hands *Sampſon*, bound with Ropes. When they ſaw him they gave ſeveral joyful Shouts, but the Spirit of God came upon him in ſuch a manner that he tore in pieces the two Ropes wherewith he was bound, and overcame them by whom he was to be led away Priſoner, and killed a thouſand of them. Thus the miſerable *Jews* for fear of the *Romans*, deliver'd unto them our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, their Brother according to the Fleſh, bound like a Malefactor. When Hell ſaw him nailed to the Croſs, and afterwards laid

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been all pulled out by him, who hath bruiſed the Serpent's Head.

If you conſider nothing but Death's Exterior, its Face and fearful Appearance, its frigid Eyes, its meager Body, its iron'd Hands; you cannot perceive any difference between the Death of God's Children, and that of the moſt wicked Varlets. But if you liſt up the Maſque, and examine the Death of the one, and of the other more exactly, you will meet with as great difference, as between Heaven and Earth, the Paradiſe of God and Hell. For as *Moſes*'s braſen Serpent, which he liſt up in the Deſart, had the form and appearance of a burning Serpent, but nothing of the Poiſon and Fire, thus the Death of the faithful appears, as the Death of other Men, but hath not the deadly and pernicious conſequences. For 'tis not only a ſign and a teſtimony of God's Grace and Favour, but the beginning of our deliverance, and the cure of all Diſeaſes. As *Moſes* when he had caſt wood into the Waters of *Marah*, they had the ſame colour, but not the ſame bitterneſs and unpleaſant taſte: Thus the Death of God's deareſt Children hath the ſame tincture and appearance as before; but Chriſt's Croſs hath taken away the danger, the trouble, and extracted out of it Diſtaſtful Bitterneſs, and changed it into unſpeakable Sweetneſs. As *Pharoah* was drown'd, with all his Army, in the waters of the *Red-ſea*, but the Children of *Iſrael* found a ſecure and pleaſant paſſage into the promiſed Land; when they were arrived upon the other ſhore of that dreadful Sea, they ſung unto God Songs of Triumph and Thankſgiving; Thus Death opens its Jaws to devour the Reprobates. 'Tis an Abyſs where they can find no bottom; but unto the Children of God 'tis a favourable paſſage into an Eternal Bliſs; as ſoon as they are gone through, they are arrived to a place of Aſſurance, Joy, and Reſt, where God furniſhes them with Songs of Triumph and Thankſgiving to the Lamb, *Rev.* 1. 15.

Balaam the Prophet was called to curſe the People of God, but he bleſſed them, contrary to the vain Expectation of *Balak*, King of *Moab*. Thus Death hath been brought into the World by the Devil, to deſtroy and utterly aboliſh the Holy Seed; but God by his infinite Goodneſs and Wiſdom, hath changed it into Salvation and Bleſſing. Let us not therefore be any longer puzzled to find out the meaning of *Sampſon*'s Riddle, *Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the ſtrong came forth ſweetneſs*, Jud. 14. For the Church of God unto whom Chriſt hath diſcovered the moſt excellent Secrets of his Kingdom, teacheth us to ſeek the Sweeteſt Comforts, out of the Belly of this old Lion.

'Tis not poſſible to judge of Muſick by a ſingle Note, or of an Oration by a Period, nor of a Comedy by a Scene. So we muſt not judge of a Battel by the firſt Aſſault, nor of a Wreſtling by the firſt embraces and efforts of the Wreſtlers. For ſome in the beginning of the Battel turn their backs, who nevertheleſs at laſt, often win the Victory; and ſome in Wreſtling are foiled at the beginning, who nevertheleſs ſupplant their Enemy, and caſt him upon the ground. Therefore that we may better underſtand the great and notable advantages, that we have over Death, we muſt examine it all alone, until the end of the encounter; we muſt take notice of every Aſſault that we give unto this unreconcilable Enemy.

As ſoon as the Taper of our our Life begins to burn, Satan ſends forth his Blaſts to extinguiſh it. Death labours to undermine this poor Dwelling from the firſt moment that it was built, it beſieges it on all ſides; makes its Approaches, in time it ſaps the Foundation, it batters us with ſeveral Diſeaſes and unexpected Accidents, every day it opens a Breach, and pulls out of this Building ſome Stones. But if Death labours to demoliſh on her part, we on ours labour to repair; and as thoſe who built the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, held with one hand the Trowel, and with the other a Sword to fight: So we defend our ſelves as well as we are able, againſt

againſt the Aſſaults of Death. Therefore we do not only endeavour to preſerve this earthly Lodge that God hath Let and Set to us for a term, and to mend up the continual Dilapidations that happen in it: but at the very ſight of Death, when it gives us the Aſſualt, we do then alſo advance our Spiritual Building, and labour to bring it to Perfection. So that we may ſay as the Apoſtle St. *Paul, if our outward Man decays, the inward Man is renewed day by day,* 2 Cor. 4.

To ſpeak right, Death meddles with nothing but with the exterior part of Man. For our principal Fort and chief Bulwark, hath no cauſe to fear to be undermined not ſapt, nor to be won by Aſſault; for 'tis rais'd above the Heavens, and built upon the Rock of Eternity. It cannot be batter'd; for as the Thunderbolts, the ſtorms of Hail and ill weather, cannot prejudice the Sun beams, becauſe they are of a Spiritual Nature: ſo all the Fury of the World, all the Powers of Hell, and the Rage of Death can never wrong the Soul, that is of a Spiritual and Immortal Nature. This Caſtle can never be famiſhed; for God furniſhes it with Manna from Heaven, and from the Rock upon which 'tis built, there runs a ſource of living waters, that riſeth to everlaſting Life. In a Word, as the Serpents crawl only upon the Duſt, Death hath no Power but upon the Earthly part of Man; therefore our Lord Jeſus Chriſt adviſeth his Apoſtles, *not to fear them that kill the Body, but cannot kill the Soul.*

At the very inſtant of our Soul's ſeparation from the Body, Death ſeems to have a great advantage upon us; but when I conſider all, I find that it hath no cauſe to boaſt of the Victory. When a valiant Captain marches out of a Town almoſt deſtroy'd, to another more ſecure, and better fortify'd, with his Weapons in his Hand; we ſay, that he hath quitted his ſtation, and not that he is overcome. Thus when this wretched Body decays, and that our Souls depart well armed with Faith and Hope, to lodge in a more ſecure place in the higheſt Heavens; no Body can ſay, to ſpeak pro-

perly, that we have been overcome. And it happens to ſuch as ſail on the Ocean, when a violent Storm threatens them with Shipwrack, they think themſelves very happy, if they can quit their Veſſel, leave it to the mercy of the Winds and Waves, and eſcape to Land with their Riches and Lives ſafe: Thus tis with us who fall upon this tempeſtuous Sea of the World; when Death raiſeth its moſt cruel ſtorms, we think our ſelves happy if we can leave this miſerable Body, which ſeems as a Ship to our Souls; and if we can ſecure our ſpiritual Life and our Heavenly Riches. Therefore we may juſtly ſay to the Faithful that are frighted when they ſee Death threatning to drown them in its Depths, as St. *Paul* to his ſhip's Company, who trembled for fear at the ſight of roaring and ſwelling Waves; *Take good courage, my brethren, for I aſſure you in the name of the living God, that your lives are ſecure, and that you ſhall loſe nothing but this Ship*, Act. 27. We may yet furniſh them with ſtronger comforts; for theſe good Mariners loſt their Ship without any hopes of recovering it again; but we are aſſured that God will one day gather up every piece of theſe broken Veſſels of our Bodies, and will join them together in a more perfect Eſtate.

Therefore Death doth not carry away our Bodies by violence, but we leave them willingly; we do not ſtay for its Summons, but we do prevent Death, and give it a Licence; when we have packt up our Bag and Baggage, we are ready to depart out of this wretched Abode where we endure all manner of Calamities; for in this Houſe Defluxions fall down, Vapours ariſe, the Pillars and Foundations tremble, the Joints open, the Windows are darkened, and the burning Fevers, like violent Fires, conſume it.

I muſt not forget, that the faithful name their Death not only a removal of their Lodging, but a removal from a Tabernacle. This teacheth us, that we muſt depart from hence with as much Joy and readineſs, as a Soldier doth out of his Tabernacle, at the end of a laborious and bloody Warfare; and with as much Pleaſure

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as the Children of *Iſrael* did out of their Camps in which they had remained in the Deſart, to enter into the ſweet and comfortable Dwellings of the Land of *Canaan.*

Not only this Body is like to an hired Houſe, or to a Tabernacle tranſported up and down; but 'tis by Sin become to our Soul a woful Priſon. Therefore Death may be compared to the Meſſengers ſent by King *Pharaoh*, on purpoſe to take *Joſeph* out of his Dungeon, and bring him to his Palace. The Body that was created to be a noble Pavilion of Joy and Honour, is become to our Soul, a wretched incommodious Priſon; and Death is like to the Furnace of *Babylon*, that burned and conſum'd the Bands of the three Children, without prejudicing their Perſons or Attire, *Dan.* 3. for it deſtroys the natural Bands that detain our Souls enſlaved to the Earth, but meddles not with its Ornaments, with its Righteouſneſs and Sanctification. 'Tis like the Skin that encloſeth the Child in his Mother's Womb, or like the Shell where the Chicken is form'd: for of neceſſity it muſt be broken before we can enter into immortal Life. In ſhort, we may ſay, That the Body which was given to the Soul, to its Palace, is become by Sin, its Grave and loathſome Sepulchre, far more noiſome than that of *Lazarus*; and that Death is like the Voice that calls upon us, *Lazarus come out.* Faithful Souls, you ſee then, that as *Sampſon* carried away the Gates of the City of *Gaza*, and tranſported them to the Top of the Hill: So hath Jeſus Chriſt, our true *Sampſon*, tranſported and carried the Gates of Death to the higheſt pitch of Glory; Therefore, whereas before we lookt upon it with Horror, at the Entrance of Hell; now we may behold it with Confidence and Joy ſaying as *Jacob* did of *Bethel, this is the Gate of Heaven!*

Seeing therefore that this is the Nature and Condition of Death, I find that Men give it too much Advantage; for we ſhould not offer to ſay, that ſuch are dead whom God hath admitted into Eternal Life; becauſe the Qualification ſhould be deriv'd from the chief and nobleſt Part;

As 'tis in nature, there is no Generation without Corruption, and we commonly ſay, that 'tis a Generation when the thing engendered is more excellent than the thing corrupted; on the contrary that 'tis a Corruption when the thing corrupted excels the thing that is engendred. For this reaſon our change and removal out of this World, ſhould rather be ſtiled a Life than a Death; 'tho our Body dies and rots in the Earth our Soul revives and mounts up to Heaven. and this mortal Life that we leave with the World, is nothing in compariſon of that Life that we ſhall enjoy with Chriſt and his Holy Angels. God is named the God of *Abraham*, of *Iſaac*, and of *Jacob*. *Now he is not the God of the dead, but of the living*, Exod. 4. Matt. 22.

I may alſo without any Figure affirm, That Death in reſpect of the Body, is no real Death, but a kind of ſleep, as 'tis ſaid in the Prophet *Daniel*, Many ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth, *Chap.* 12. And in *Iſaiah*, that the *Juſt ſleep in their Beds*: Therefore our Saviour ſpeaking of *Jairus*'s Daughter, declared, *The Child is not dead but ſleepeth*, Matt. 9 And of *Lazarus* his Friend, *Lazarus our friend ſleepeth, but I go to awake him.* Beloved, if thou art of the number of ſuch as Chriſt loveth, thy Death will be but a kind of ſleep, of a ſhort continuance, and of a few days; the Lord will raiſe thee up again: *For the hour cometh, and is already, That the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that ſhall hear, ſhall revive*, John 5. During this Life the aſſaults of Death are no better than light skirmiſhes, the moſt ſenſible and moſt dangerous blow that it ſtrikes in appearance, is when it ſeparates the Soul from the Body; but the laſt and moſt final encounter, that will put an end to all diſputes, will be at the day of Judgment, when Jeſus Chriſt will appear from Heaven with the Hoſt of all his Immortal Angels and Saints, to encourage us to the encounter. He will come with an encouraging Voice of an Archangel, and the laſt Trumpet ſhall ſound. Then Death will endeavour to keep us ſtill in its black Priſons, and our bones will be found

found without Life or Motion; but the Spirit of God ſhall breath upon theſe dry Bones, and will cauſe them to revive. As when the Prophet *Jonas* was three days and three Nights in the Belly of the Whale, God commanded the Fiſh to vomit him up again upon the ground: Thus when we ſhall have made ſo long our Abode in our Graves, as God hath appointed in his Wiſdom, Death ſhall be forced to reſtore all that it hath ſwallowed. And as *Daniel* came out of the Lions Den by break of day, thoſe ſavage Beaſts having done him no harm: Thus at the break of the laſt day, at the riſing of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, we ſhall all go out of Death's deep Dens; and as if God had ſent an Angel on purpoſe to ſhut the mouth of this old Lion, we ſhall then find that it hath done us no harm. Inſtead of devouring us, it will prove a faithful keeper of our Bones. The faithful then may ſpeak to Death in the language of the Prophet *Micah*, *Rejoice not againſt me, O mine Enemy, when I ſhall fall I ſhall riſe, when I ſit in darkneſs the Lord ſhall be a Light unto me*, Micah 7. 8. As *Moſes* ſaid to *Pharoah*, *we will go into the Wilderneſs to ſacrifice unto our God, we will go out of thine Egypt with our young and with our old, with our Sons and with our Daughters, with our flocks and with our herds, there ſhall not an hoof be left behind*, Exod. 10. Thus we in an Holy Confidence, may talk with Death, maugre thy Rage and Fury, we will go up to Heaven to Sacrifice to our God immortal praiſes; we ſhall get out of thy fetters. We, our Wives, our Children, our Brothers and Siſters, our Parents and Friends, all the People of God, whom thou doſt at preſent keep in a cloſe reſtraint. Notwithſtanding the infernal Attempts of thine inhumane power, there ſhall not remain ſo much as an handful, no not ſo much as the leaſt grain of our Aſhes behind us.

When the Son of God ſhall appear in his Glory from Heaven, ſhall conſume all Deaths, Trophies and Monuments with Irreſiſtible Flames. So that it ſhall happen to this imperious Enemy of Mankind, as

it happen'd to the Kings of the *Ammorites* mention'd in the *Iſraelitiſh* Hiſtory *Joſh.* 1. 10. *Joſhua* ſuffer'd them to live until he was return'd from the Victory, and when he had perfectly overcome all his Enemies, he commanded them to be brought forth, and gave order to his Captains to tread upon their necks, and with his own Sword he diſpatch'd them, caſt them into a Cave, and cauſed great Stones to be rolled at the entrance of it. Thus ſhall our true and Celeſtial *Joſhua* deal with Death; he ſuffers it to reign while he is gone to purſue his Enemies; for the laſt Enemy that ſhall be deſtroyed by him is Death. When he ſhall have perfectly ſubdued all other Enemies, he will crown all his Victories with a glorious End, and accompliſhing the Churches Triumph, by cauſing us to trample upon Death that ſhall be caſt into the bottomleſs Pit, whereof the Entrance ſhall be ſhut up for ever, *Rev.* 10. Then ſhall be accompliſhed this glorious Prophecy, *Death is ſwallow'd up in Victory,* 1 Cor. 15 for the Spirit of God aſſures us in expreſs Terms, *That Death ſhall be no more.*

By what we have ſaid, it may eaſily appear what is become of the Rope thrice twiſted by the Devil; with an intent to ſtrangle therewith all Mankind. The Son of God hath cut in pieces the firſt of theſe unhappy Ties, by his Almighty Power. By the Spirit of ſanctification he looſens the ſecond by degrees; and by the laſt he draws us to himſelf, and then he burns and conſumes it altogether. Therefore we have no reaſon to fear an Eternal Death, nor to tremble when Hell opens wide its Jaws. If we reſiſt the Devil, he flies away from us, *Jam* 4. At laſt we ſhall trample him under our Feet, *Rom.* 16. 'Tis true, that the ſad and doleful effects of the ſpiritual Death commonly draw out of us many a ſad Groan and Tear, whilſt our Souls remains in this ſinful Fleſh. We are already got out of the Tombs of Corruption and Sin, but yet bear about us, as it were, our Winding ſheet, and ſome odd Reliques of our natural Miſery. But we have this Conſideration to comfort our drooping Spirits; That

Chriſt

Chriſt will ſhortly give the ſame Order from Heaven for us, as he did for *Lazarus*, *looſe him and let him go*, Joh. 11. So that inſtead of the Corruption of our Nature, that is ſo incommodious to us, he will inveſt us in an eſtate of Glory, Incorruption, Immortality, and perfect Happineſs. In relation to the natural Death, we may juſtly ſay, That our Lord and Saviour hath freed us from all the Fears that it might cauſe in us. So that 'tis my Judgment, that we may not only affirm, that we have not the leaſt Apprehenſion of it, but may expect it with Confidence; for if we be truly of the Number of the Faithful and God's adopted Sons, we hope, deſire, and haſten Death's Arrival by our moſt earneſt and moſt paſſionate Wiſhes.

What I have already declared in this Chapter, might ſatisfie any Chriſtian Soul, and furniſh it with ſufficient Conſiderations to ſtrengthen it againſt all Apprehenſions of Death. Now, as one that wants to buy Stuffs in a Shop, when he cheapens ſuch as are ſlight, and of a ſmall Value, he caſts an Eye only upon a Piece or Pattern, and by that judges of the reſt; but when he Intends to purchaſe a rich Tapiſtry of great Value he deſires to viſit and conſider every Part, one after another, and make an Eſtimation of the Value and Beauty of every Corner: So I judge; that the Wiſe and Religious Reader will deſire now, that as I have diſcovered to him in groſs, the Body of *Conſolations againſt the Fears of Death*, I ſhould in the next place unfold theſe hidden Excellencies, produce every part of them by degrees to his Contemplation, and with my Pen, make him take Notice of all the Rarities.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

From whence proceed the Fears of Death.

AS a wiſe and diſcreet Phyſician uſually examines with care, the cauſes of the Diſeaſe before he preſcribes a Remedy; and as an experienced Chirurgeon ſearcheth the Wound before he claps the Plaiſter to it; thus I Judge it neceſſary to ſeek with Diligence from whence the Fears of Death proceed, before we ſhall appoint Remedies to the Faithful Souls. For when we ſhall perfectly underſtand the nature of the Diſeaſe and its principal Cauſes, we ſhall without difficulty be better able to aſſign a Convenient Remedy. When we ſhall have ſearched the Wound, and waſhed it clean, we will with God's Aſſiſtance pour into it the true Balm of *Gilead*.

Firſt, we have juſt Reaſon to accuſe our ſelves of too much unmindfulneſs of Death. We don't meditate ſo often as we ſhould, upon the miſery and frailty of our poor decaying Nature. We acknowledge it, I confeſs, with our Tongues, that our Life is but a breath in our Noſtrils, a vapour that ſoon diſappears, a ſhadow that quickly vaniſhes away; but in the mean time we flatter our ſelves in our Hearts with more pleaſant Thoughts and Deſires, as *Herod*, that Men ſhould look upon us as ſo many little Gods, *Acts* 12. We ſuffer our ſelves to be deceived by the flattering Inſinuations of our corrupted Fleſh, and by the deluſive Suggeſtions of the old Serpent, that whiſpers to us, as to our firſt Parents, *You ſhall not die*, Gen. 3.

2. We commonly affirm, that Death is inexorable; nevertheleſs for the moſt part we live as if we had made an agreement with Death, and had ſecret intelligence with the Grave, *Iſa.* 22. Death approaches with Feet of Wool, without noiſe; we imagin therefore

fore that it will never come near us, as that wicked Servant of the Goſpel, *Matth.* 24. who concluded from his Maſters delays of coming, that he would not come at all. We hate and abominate the ſight of all things that repreſent to us any Appearance of Death, or that call to our minds its remembrance. If at any time its Image comes in our way, we turn from it our Eyes, and baniſh out of our Fanſie all Imaginations of it, as of a moſt odious and deceitful Illuſion. Death ſeizeth upon us before we have well thought whether we be mortal or no. Therefore we are ſurpriz'd and aſtoniſhed at the approaches, and we become like the fooliſh *Iſraelites*, that trembled and fled before *Goliah*, becauſe they were not accuſtomed to behold him.

3. We depend too much upon ſecond Cauſes. We look upon Death as a thing that happens by chance, or as an evil that may be prevented, or at leaſt putt away from us for a time; whereas we ſhould be fully perſuaded, that God hath determined and appointed, not only Death it ſelf, but alſo all the cauſes and means by which it commonly happens. Therefore we are often fill'd with Diſpleaſure, and reduc'd to murmur and repine againſt God. We grin and bite the ſtone, inſtead of adoring in all humility that wiſe Hand that caſt it. In a word, when ever Death comes to us, we are ready to ſay to it, as the Devils to our Saviour, *Wherefore art thou come to torment us before the time?* Matth. 3.

4. We are too much tied to this Earth, we are ſo united to the World, that we would willingly make here our Abode for ever, and cannot abide to hear that Death will remove us. Our Luſts have no bounds, and we often ſpend our ſelves in the perſuance of theſe miſerable Advantages. When we draw neareſt to the end of our life, and of our mortal Race, 'tis then, that many are moſt earneſt to make large Proviſions of Worldly Vanities. We build ſtately Dwellings, and ſumptuous Palaces at that very moment, when we ſhould think of nothing but of build-

ing

ing our Tomb, and preparing our Winding-sheet. We have so violent a Passion for all the Enjoyments of this life, that to separate us from them, is to pluck out our Hearts, and tear in pieces our tender Bowels. When Death comes to our Bed-side, and offers to pull us out, we are ready to say as the Sluggard in the *Proverbs*, *A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands*, Prov. 6. When our Divine Bridegroom knocks at our Gates, we are scarce willing to abandon our Delights, as the Spouse in the *Canticles*. What saith the Worldling, Must I leave my sumptuous Palaces, my pleasant Dwellings, and my delightful Gardens? must I relinquish all this rich Tapistry, these precious Moveables, and all these rare and exquisite Ornaments that enrich my Parlors, Chambers, and Closets? Must this unmerciful Death divest me so soon of all Offices and Dignities, and hinder me from a full and peaceable enjoyment of all these Riches and Treasures? Must it ravish from me in an instant, all my Delights and Satisfactions? Is there no Remedy, but must I be pluck'd from the Embraces of my beloved Wife, from the sight of my dear Children, and from the sweet company of all my Friends? Must I receive no more the services of my Domesticks? When we are in this unprepared State, 'tis no wonder if Death is so terrible to us, and if it causeth us to feel the sharpness of its sting. For as of *Absolom* when he was hanged by the hair of his Head, in a Tree of the Forest, *Joab* took three Darts, and struck him through the Heart; thus when our Affections are too much entangled with the World, and with the expectation of Earthly Contentments; 'tis then that they are miserably exposed to all the Darts and violent Attempts of Death.

5. Another principal Cause of the Fear of Death, is a Wicked Life. We are plung'd in the Vices and Debaucheries of the Age. We suffer our selves to be corrupted by ill Company, and carried away with the Torrent of vicious Customs. 'Tis therefore

therefore no wonder if Death fills our Souls with Apprehenſions, becauſe it comes to us armed with our Sins, and is preſſed by the remorſe of Conſcience, and horrour of our Crimes. How came it to paſs that ſuch a terrible Aſtoniſhment fell upon King *Belſhazzar*, when he ſaw the fingers of an Hand writing upon the Wall of his Palace the Sentence of his Doom? *Dan.* 5. 'Twas becauſe he had prophaned the Holy Veſſels of God's Houſe; and was rioting in the ſociety of Laſcivious Women. Wherefore did *Felix* tremble, when he heard St. *Paul* diſcourſe of *Juſtice, Temperance, and of Judgment to come*? Acts 24. 'tis becauſe he was a wicked Varlet, given over to all manner of filthy and unjuſt living. Thus becauſe we profane the Members of our Body, that are as the Veſſels of God's Sanctuary, and becauſe our Life is vicious and diſorderly, we can't abide to hear Death mention'd; and when it comes to us, we are ready to ſpeak to it in *Felix*'s Language to St. *Paul, depart for this time.* So that the love of Sin, and the Fear of Death, are as two Siſters that hold one another by the Hand; or rather they are Twins, that are born and die together. As the Prophet *Amos* ſaid to the *Iſraelites, Ye put far the evil day, and cauſe the ſeent of violence to come near*, Amos 6. So we may ſay to the Men in this Age; Ye put as far from you as you can the day of Death, and draw near to all manner of Impurity, Covetouſneſs, Ambition, Pride, Vanity, Uſury, Rapin, Violence, Envy, Malice, and ſuch like Soul Plagues. You don't only draw near to theſe abominable Vices, but what is worſe, you lodge them in your Bowels, and harbour them in your Hearts. Certainly we may very well apply to all vicious Perſons, what the Prophet *Jeremiah* tells of *Jeruſalem*; *Her filthineſs is in her skirts, ſhe remembreth not her laſt end*, Lam. 1.

6. I have taken notice of another Defect in us. We miſtruſt the Providence of God, and know not how to repoſe our ſelves upon his Fatherly Care. We have a too worthy eſteem of our ſelves, and of our own

own ſufficiency. We can't reſolve to die, becauſe we fanſie our ſelves very uſeful in the World, and that our Death would bring a conſiderable loſs to the Church of God, to the State, or to our Family.

7. Becauſe the Soul and Body are link'd together in a very ſtrict Union; we can't imagine how they can be ſeparated without great and unſpeakable convulſions. Our Infidelity is ſo great, that we can't reſt ſatisfied upon the Promiſe of God, who engages to ſuccour us in our diſtreſs, and to deliver us from all our troubles, *Iſa.* 50. 'Tis true, *Jacob*'s Ladder that reaches from the Earth to Heaven, may raviſh us; But it ſeems very uneaſy to aſcend. Paradiſe is Rich, Glorious and Delightful to the uttermoſt; but its Gate is ſtraight, and choaked up with Thorns and Bryers.

8. I judge that one of the chief cauſes of the Fear of Death, is becauſe we look upon God as a moſt ſevere and mercileſs Judge, inflam'd with Anger and Fury againſt us, and armed with Vengeance. Whereas we ſhould conſider and acknowledge him to be a merciful Father, full of Compaſſion and Kindneſs for Mankind. Every Slave trembles at the ſight of his Lord, and there is no Malefactor but is afraid, when he appears before his Judge, to be put to the Rack. And can I who am all ſpotted with Sin, and blacken'd with Crimes; can I appear before that Glorious Throne, that cauſes the Seraphims to cover their Faces with their Wings? *Iſa.* 6. How can I that am but ſtubble, ſubſiſt in the preſence of the God of Vengeance, *who is a conſuming fire?* Heb. 10.

9. There is another viſible fault in us, we don't embrace with a true and lively Faith, the Death and Paſſion of our Lord and Saviour. We all ſpeak of Jeſus Chriſt Crucify'd, but we don't know the Divine Vertue of his Crucifixion, nor feel its Efficacy. We don't conſider that his Death hath broken down the Partition that ſhut us out of the Heavenly Sanctuary, and that his Blood hath track'd us a way to Paradiſe, and

and procured us an entrance into that place of Eternal Bliſs.

Now to prevent the horror of the Grave we don't conſider as we ought, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the Tomb, and that he hath Sanctified it with his Holy and Divine Preſence. We don't imprint in our Imagination, that 'tis juſt and reaſonable that we ſhould be conformable to Chriſt in his Abaſement, if we will have any ſhare with him in his Glory and Exhaltation.

11. Beſides, that which entertains in our Souls the Fears of Death is this, we look upon it as if it were in its full ſtrength and vigour. Whereas we ſhould remember, that Jeſus Chriſt hath overcome and diſarm'd Death by his powerful Reſurrection, and that for our parts we need but follow the Footſteps of his Glorious Victories, and faſten that furious Beaſt to his Triumphant Chariot.

12. We don't conſider as we ſhould, with a ſerious and religious application of the mind, how our Saviour Chriſt is not only riſen from the Sepulchre, Victorious over Death, but that he is alſo aſcended up into the higheſt Heavens, as our fore-runner to prepare a place for us, and that by departing out of our miſerable Bodies, we follow the Paths of our ever bleſſed Saviour, to reap with him the Fruits of his moſt glorious Victories.

13. We ſtoop too much to conſider our frail, corruptible, and mortal Nature; and we ſeldom enter into this moſt uſeful Meditation; that by the Holy Ghoſt we are nearly and unſeparably united to Jeſus Chriſt the Prince of Life, and the Source of Light; and that we have already in us the Seeds of Bleſſedneſs, of Glory and Immortality.

14. As the Children of *Iſrael* murmured againſt *Moſes* in the Deſart, and wiſhed to be again in *Egypt*, forgetting their bitter ſlavery, under which they had groan'd, their painful labouring amongſt the Bricks and the Heat of their Furnaces, and minding only the Pleaſure which they had loſt. They dream'd of nothing,

nothing. but of the plenty of Bread and Fleſh, of the Cucumbers, Onions, and of the Meats with which they had ſo often filled their Bellies. Thus we repine at Death, becauſe we don't dream of the evils from which it delivers us, think only upon the vain Pleaſures and ſeeming advantages of which it robs us.

15. We imagine that Death deſtroys and reduces us to nothing; and we don't conſider that it never meddles with the principal part of our being, but only pulls off from us Sin, and breaks the reſt of the Chains of our Spiritual Bondage; ſo that Death is rather the Death of Sin than of the Faithful.

16. Here is another great Fault in us; we don't lift up our Minds to conſider the Glory prepared for us at the egreſs of our Souls out of our mortal Bodies. However we may demean our ſelves, and whatever we may pretend, we don't firmly, without doubting, believe the Felicities which God promiſeth to us in the contemplation of his Face. Sometimes we may think upon the Joys of Paradiſe; but 'tis a Thought that paſſes through our Souls with too much ſpeed, and don't take any Root. So that many, if they were not aſhamed, would be ready to ſpeak in the Emperor *Adrian*'s Language, *My little Soul, my deareſt Darling, O Gueſt and Companion of my Body, whither art thou now going?*

17. To theſe former Cauſes of the Fears of Death in us, we may add another: That we ſuffer our Eyes to dwell too much upon the rottenneſs and corruption that threatens our Body; whereas we ſhould carry our Eye-ſight to behold its Glorious Reſurrection, that ſhall ſoon follow. Pleaſant Abode, and delightful Companion of my Soul, muſt Death, this cruel Death, ſeparate it from thee with ſo much violence? Muſt thou part with thy dear and ſweet Companion? Muſt my Soul leave thee upon ſuch grievous and lamentable terms? That of ſo many Honours which have been heap'd upon thee, thou ſhalt not carry ſo much

as

as their ſhadow to the Grave? That of ſo many rich Movables and Treaſures, thou ſhalt bear away nothing but a Winding-ſheet, a few Boards, or at the moſt, ſome pounds of Lead? After thou haſt lived in ſo much ſplendour and magnificence, muſt thy Covering be at laſt the Worms? After thou haſt walked ſo proudly in Palaces gilded with Gold, and perfum'd, muſt at laſt thy Confinement be in a ſtinking and loathſome Sepulchre? Muſt theſe Beautiful Eyes be clos'd? Theſe Lips of Coral become pale? This golden Mouth be ſtopp'd? And muſt this dainty Fleſh rot and become odious to the Eyes of the World?

18. In the laſt place, we don't meditate, as we ought, upon that eternal Bliſs and Glory that hath been prepared for us from the foundation of the World, and into which we ſhall enter, when Chriſt Jeſus ſhall come from Heaven with his holy Angels, to judge both the Quick and the Dead; when he ſhall re-unite our Souls and Bodies together for all Eternity; that *he may be Glorified in his Saints, and Wonderful in all the Faithful.*

CHAP. VII.

The firſt Remedy againſt the Fears of Death, is to Meditate often upon it.

WE become acquainted with the moſt dreadful things by Cuſtom aad Converſation. Freſh Soldiers commonly quiver and ſhake at the ſight of an Enemy; they tremble at the Volleys of Shot, and half dead fall to the Ground at the terrible noiſe of the great Ordnance. But when their Courage hath been hardned by a long Exerciſe, they can then without fear ſeek the Enemy in his greateſt advantages, and can go as merrily to the Combat as to a Feaſt, or a Triumph. The Showers of ſmall Shot

the Lightning and Thunder of the Cannon, cau't make them ſo much as to ſhut their Eyes, or ſtoop their Heads; they then laugh at their former Apprehenſions: Thus the firſt conceits of Death commonly terrify us; but when we ſeriouſly meditate upon it, and look it in the Face, we ſhall not only contemn it but we ſhall ſeek it boldly in its Retreats, and with an undaunted Countenance, we ſhall behold Death let fly all its Arrows, and caſting its Thunderbolts, without the leaſt apprehenſion. As they who are not wont to ſee Savage Beaſts, dare not draw near to them, and can ſcarce look upon them without fear; but ſuch as are familiarly acquainted with them can touch them without apprehenſion, and freely play with them. Thus 'tis with them who have never had any Confidence to look Death in the Face; they tremble, and are filled with aſtoniſhment, as ſoon as they ſee its Approaches; but they who often behold Death, are familiarly acquainted with it, and therefore they can with Confidence thruſt their Fiſts into its Jaws. *Moſes* fled away from his Rod, when it was firſt turn'd into a Serpent; but when he began to take it into his Hand, and ſaw that it return'd to its former ſhape and being, he was far from running from it, or entertaining the leaſt apprehenſion of it; he made a very happy uſe of it, and by God's Command, wrought many great Miracles. Thus 'tis with Death; it frights us at firſt, but if we can but take hold of it with the hands of a true and lively Faith, it will be ſo far from ſcaring or frightning us, that it will diſcover to us a World of delightful Wonders.

Death therefore is ſo far from terrifying ſuch as are accuſtomed to it, that it fills them full of Comfort and Joy. As a Child that looks upon the Father who hath a Vizard on his Face is frighted, and begins to cry, but if he hath but the Confidence to pull off the Vizard, and take but notice of the loving Smiles of his Parent hid under that Deformity, he will not only

only ceaſe from Weeping, and ſettle his Mind, but he will alſo leap for Joy and embrace him. Thus if we look upon Death with a timorous Countenance, and behold its hidious appearance, we ſhall be ſtruck with a ſudden horror; but if we can with any Aſſurance lift up its Vizard, we ſhall ſoon diſcover our Heavenly Father, and with Tears of Joy we ſhall run to embrace him. As the Apoſtles when they eſpied Jeſus Chriſt in the Night walking upon the Waves of the Sea, cried out in a fright, thinking that it had been a Spirit; but when he drew near to them, and they heard his Voice, they perceiv'd him to be their Saviour; when therefore they had received him into their Ship, the Storm ceas'd immediately. Thus if we look upon Death at a diſtance, the blindneſs and ignorance, with which we are poſſeſs'd, will repreſent to us a frightful Spirit; but if we examine and behold it nearer by the help of the Goſpel Light, we ſhall find it to be our Salvation, and the accompliſhing of our Redemption. All our Fears will then be calm'd, and our Souls will return to their former temper. In a word, as he that runs from his Enemy, encreaſes his Courage, and renders him more earneſt and reſolv'd to perſue him; thus when Death ſees us tremble, and decline its Approaches, it becomes more proud and imperious over us. We muſt therefore think betimes of Death, repreſent to our ſelves continually, and enter into an Acquaintance with it. It was Holy *Job*'s practice; for he *cried unto the Pit, thou art my Father, and to the Corruption and the Worms, you are my Mother and my Siſters*, Job 16. And imagine that this was the chief reaſon of *Philip* of *Macedon*'s commanding a Page every Morning to rouſe him out of his ſleep, with *O King remember thou art a mortal Man.* For by this often repeated Leſſon, he labour-ed to humble his lofty Mind, and teach his frail nature not to Glory ſo much in the Spendour of his Crown and Sceptre, nor to abuſe the Power committed to his Truſt. By this means alſo he became acquainted with Death, that it might not ſeem ſtrange when it ſhould

come in earneſt and ſnatch him away. This was alſo the Deſign of that Emperor *Meruan*, or *Meruanes*, who cauſed this Motto to be engraven upon his Seal, *Remember that thou muſt die.* Theſe words minded him of that which his Courtiers were afraid to mention to him. So that this great Prince never confirm'd with his Seal the Death of any Man; but at the ſame time he repreſented to himſelf, that his own Death was not to be avoided. For the ſame reaſon, the Noblemen of *China* are wont to have their Coffins ready made in their Chambers, that at every moment they might look Death in the Face. And for that intent, the *Egyptians* in their moſt ſumptuous Feaſts, commonly placed a dead Man's Scull in an eminent corner of the Room. By this Spectacle they intended not only to oblige the Gueſts to Moderate their Joys, and to reſtrain their unruly Luſts, but alſo to bring them acquainted with, and to accuſtom them to behold Death amongſt all their Delights. They treated it, as if their deſign had been to invite it to their moſt delicious Feaſts, that they might rejoyce together with it, *John* 16. I conceive that the *Jews* for the ſame cauſe builded their Sepulchres in their Gardens of Pleaſure, that they alſo might have the Image of Death continually before them, and that in the midſt of all their divertiſements, it might be their moſt pleaſant and ordinary Entertainment. For us Chriſtians to oblige us to think upon Death, there is no need that a Page ſhould remember us every Day that we are Mortal, nor that the Motto of a Ring ſhould call to our minds, that we muſt die; there is no need of a Coffin to be plac'd in our Chambers: in ſuch things there is many times more Oſtentation than Piety; nor is it needful that a dead Man's Scull be put before our Eyes, or that a Sepulchre be built or hewn in our Gardens and Places of Recreation and Delight. For as *Alexander* the Great underſtood that he was a mortal Man, by the Blood that ran out of his Wounds: Thus the Diſeaſes unto which we are

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ſubject, and the daily infirmities that we feel, ſufficiently inſtruct and aſſure us, that we are Mortals: And as a famous Philoſopher, when he received the unhappy news of his only Son's untimely Death, anſwer'd the Meſſenger with a ſettled Countenance; *I knew*, ſaid he, *that I begot him a mortal Man.* Xenoph. Thus will the Faithful ſay without change of Countenance, or appearance of Fear when his Death is declar'd to him, I knew that my Mother had conceived me a mortal Man. I knew very well that Death is the Tribute that we muſt all pay to Nature, and that upon this condition, I am entered into the World.

If we will make uſe of any exterior help to imprint this Leſſon into our Fancy, we muſt Practiſe with care the advice of the wiſe Man; *It is better to go to the Houſe of Mourning than to that of Feaſting.* Eccleſ. 7. for that is the end of all Men, and the Living will lay it to his Heart. Never look upon a diſeaſed Body ſtretch'd upon a Bed, nor upon a dead Corpſe in a Coffin, but remember that this is an univerſal Law unto which all Mankind muſt pay Obedience; that it is the broad Road of all the Earth, and that there thou mayeſt behold the lively Image of thy future State. I conceive this may be a good expedient, and very ſucceſsful to entertain in our Minds the continual Thoughts of Death, to make our laſt Will betimes, and frequently to perſue it; for as when we meditate upon a Farewel that we are to take of our Friends, we feel in our Souls the ſame Affections and Motions as are in us at the moment of our Separation; Thus will it be with us, when we ſeriouſly meditate upon that laſt Farewel that we are to bid to the World. Death will ſeem to appear upon our Lips, or rather we ſhall think our ſelves already in the ſweet Embraces of our Divine Jeſus, our glorious Redeemer.

Beſides thoſe things that are extraordinary, I find nothing in, or out of us, nothing that we feel, taſte or reliſh; in ſhort nothing that paſſeth

either in our private or publick Converſation, but is able to recal to our minds the ſerious Conſideration of Death. The Fleſh that thou doſt eat, the Wool that cloaths thy Nakedneſs, the Silk that adorns thy Body; in general, all thy Garments and Ornaments are but the ſpoils of the Dead Creatures. The ſight therefore of all theſe things, muſt call to thy Remembrance thy frail and mortal State, and cauſe thee to meditate upon the Preacher's ſaying; *The ſame Accident that happens to the beaſts, the ſame happens to mankind; as is the death of the one, ſo is the death of the other. They have all the ſame Breath, and Man hath no advantage above a Beaſt; for all is Vanity, all goes to the ſame place, all proceeds from the Duſt, and ſhall return to the Duſt again.*

Never pull off thy Cloaths, but remember that thou muſt ſhortly quit this miſerable Body, and lay it down in the Grave. When thou art entring into thy Bed, think upon the Sepulchre where thou muſt one day be ſtretch'd. If thou doſt awake in the Night, conſider that Death will ſhortly come, and put out the Taper of thy Life. Let thy Sleep be an image of thy Death, and let it call to thy mind, how thou muſt within a few days ſleep in a bed of duſt. When thou awakeſt, think upon the delightful ſound of the Arch Angels Trumpet, that ſhall rouſe thee out of Death's long ſleep; ſay within thy ſelf when thou ariſeſt, It may be that I ſhall never riſe again till the Son of God ſhall come from Heaven, to lift me out of the Grave with his Almighty Hand. When we caſt our Eyes upon the riſing Sun, Let us ſay within our ſelves, It may be I ſhall never behold any other Sun riſe again but the Son of Righteouſneſs, that carries healing under his Wings. Conſider when thou putteſt on thy Garments that the time is coming, when thou muſt be cloathed with a more magnificent and glorious Robe, a Robe of Light and Immortality. When thou ſitteſt down to eat, think upon the Hour that is drawing near, in which Death will feed upon thy Carcaſe; imagine that it may be, that this is the laſt time that thou ſhalt

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ſit at the Table, that next thou may'ſt ſit with *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, with all the bleſſed Martyrs, who have waſh'd and whiten'd their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb, and that it may be, that thou ſhalt never taſte any more but of the Food of Angels, and of the Fruit of the Tree of Life, and that thou ſhalt never drink but of the new Wine in the Kingdom of Heaven, and of the Rivers of Eternal Pleaſures, that run from the Throne of God.

Every time that thou goeſt out of thy Dwelling, or changeſt thy Abode, fanſie to thy ſelf that in a ſhort time thou muſt depart out of this mortal Tabernacle. Art thou alone, and ſeparated from human Society? Remember that within a few days, Death will ſeparate and divide thee. Art thou going to any meeting, or entring into any Company, or marching to the Holy Aſſemblies, diſcourſe with thy ſelf in this manner, It may be, that I ſhall never go to any other Company, until I come to the Church and Congregation of the Firſt-born, whoſe names are written in Heaven. Art thou invited to the Marriage of a Friend? Say unto thy Soul, It may be I ſhall never go to any other Feaſt, but to the Marriage of the Lamb, offered from the Foundation of the World. Doſt thou ſee a rich and glorious Palace, or a pleaſant Garden? Say to thy ſelf, It may be, I ſhall never ſee any other Palace, but that where the living God dwells; and it may be I ſhall nevr behold any other place of Pleaſure, but the Celeſtial Paradiſe.

If thou caſteſt down thine Eyes to look upon the Earth, upon which thou treadeſt, Conſider at the ſame time, that this Earth or ſome like to it, ſhall afford thee a Grave, and that thou ſhalt ſleep there the Sleep of Death. Remember what God told *Adam*, *Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return*, Gen. 3. Or ſay with the Holy Man *Job*, *Remember, I pray thee, that thou haſt formed me of clay, and that thou ſhalt reduce me to duſt. I ſhall ſleep in the duſt, and if thou ſeekeſt for me in the morning, I ſhall be no more*, Job 20 Job. 7.

If thou takeſt a View of the Plants, of the Herbs and Flowers, don't forget what the Word of God ſpeaks concerning our Life, in the 90. *Pſalm*, That *Man is like the Graſs which groweth up; in the Morning it flouriſheth and is green, in the Evening 'tis cut down and wither'd.* And in the 130 *Pſalm*, *As for Man his Days are as graſs; as the Flowers of the Field ſo he flouriſheth: for the Wind paſſeth over it, and 'tis gone, and the place thereof ſhall know it no more.* And elſewhere; *All fleſh is like graſs, and the glory of Man, like the flower of the field*, Iſa. 40. 1 Pet. 1.

If thou takeſt notice of the ſhadow of the Needle in a Dial that follows the ſwift Motion of the Sun, or of the ſhadows which ſolid Bodies caſt upon the Earth; In the Evening they ſtretch a great way and a little after vaniſh; conſider ſeriouſly, and engrave in thy Mind this excellent Sentence; *Man is like vanity, his days are as a ſhadow that paſſeth away*, Pſal. 144. and ſay, as *David*, *I am gone as the ſhadow when it declineth*, Pſalm 109.

If thou heareſt the whiſtling of the Winds, which God taketh out of his Store-houſes, lift up thy Soul unto God thy Creator, and ſay with *Job*, Job 7. *Remember that my life is but a wind, mine eye ſhall ſee no more good*, Job 30. that is, the imaginary Good of this miſerable World. And elſewhere, *Thou lifteſt me up to the wind, thou cauſeſt me to ride upon it, and diſſolveſt my Subſtance.*

If thou looketſt up to the Glory and Beauty of the Heavens, and beholdeſt the raviſhing ſight of the Stars; conſider that thy Gracious God hath form'd thee after his Image: not to continue always amongſt this ſlimy and miſerable Earth, but to dwell with him for ever in the Heavens; and that at the end of the Race, he will raiſe and carry thee into the Palace of his Glory, where thou ſhalt ſhine as the Sun in its greateſt Splendor.

If thou doſt meditate upon the Changeableneſs of the Seaſons, remember that the Spring of thy Infancy, the

the hot Summer of thy Youth, the Autumn of thy Maturity, and ſad countenanced Winter of thy cold and decrepit Age, ſhall ſucceed one another in the ſame Order.

Let him who travels by Land, think upon *Job*'s Complaint, *My days have been ſwifter than a poſt, they flee away, they ſee no good.* Job 9. Let him call to mind the Apoſtles excellent ſaying, *This one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before; I preſs forwards towards the mark, for the prize of the high Calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus* Phil.

Let him who falls upon the Sea, fanſie the whole World as a great Sea ſwelling with Waves, our Life as a dangerous Voyage, and our Days as Ships that paſs away in a Moment; and let him conſider that the laſt Wind of Death will drive us into the Haven of Eternal Felicity, to the Enjoyments of immortal Glory, *Job* 9.

Doth God bleſs us with Children? Let us underſtand that we are minded by them of our Mortality, for they come to take our Room, and to ſucceed in our Eſtate: Doth God take them away to his Reſt, and of whom we are moſt fond? Let this advertiſe us, That God intends thereby to cut off all the lower Roots, that tye us to this Earth, to unlooſe our Hearts and Affections, that we may offer them up to him alone. Inſtead of ſpending our Lives in Tears, and indulging our fooliſh Humours in needleſs Diſpleaſures; Let us comfort our ſelves with this Conſideration, That by this means a part of our ſelves is entred into Heaven and that t'other part will follow apace. Let us ſay with *David, We ſhall go to them, but they ſhall not return to us.*

Let the Magiſtrate, whenever he delivers his Vote, or pronounces a Sentence, be provided with this Conſideration; That he who ſits in the Judgment-Seat here below, ſhall ſtand at the Bar, and be judged himſelf above: That one day he ſhall appear as a poor Priſoner

soner at the Tribunal of his great God. That the Books will be opened, and that the universal Judge of the World will pursue every particular of his Accusation: that he must render an Account, not only of his Words and Actions, but also of his most secret Thoughts, and that without examination at the Rack, God will discover the very secrets of his heart.

Let the Gentleman whenever he receives his Rents and his Revenues, call to mind the Tribute that he must needs pay to Death. Let the Prince and the Lord, when he handles his Royal Patents, and his ancient Charters, or when he examines the Homage and Duties to be paid to his House and Families, take notice that he must go in Person to Heaven's Gates, and pay his Homage to the Divinity. Let the King, who sits in his Seat of Justice, or Chair of State, think upon the Throne of the King of Kings, before which he must appear, as well as the most wretched Slave, and the meanest of his Subjects; and that he must be accountable to a just God, who is no respecter of Persons.

Let the Minister he never employ'd about the Duties of his Function, but let him long and wish for that Happy day, in the which the Lamb shall instruct and feed him in Person, and lead him to the Fountains of living Water.

Let the Christian Soldier engrave upon his Sword this Sentence of *Job*, *Is there not as it were a warfare appointed to all mortals on earth?* Job 7. And instead of thirsting after humane Blood, let him prepare to encounter Death it self.

Let the Husbandman, whenever he sows his Seed, or when he reaps the Corn of his Fields, be mindful of the Season that comes on apace, in which his Body must rot in the Earth, that it might grow up to Eternity. Let him meditate upon what St. *Paul* saith, *O fool, that which thou sowest is not quickned, except it die.* 1 Cor. 15. And let him meditate upon *David*'s comfortable Persuasion, *They who sow in tears, shall reap with songs of triumph*, Psal. 126.

Let

Let any Handy-crafts-man that works in his Shop, imprint in his Mind, this excellent Sentence, *Our days are like the days of an hireling*; and when he hath ended his Task, and is departing to his Reſt, let him comfort himſelf with his Aſſurance, That as ſoon as he ſhall have ended that Work that God hath given him to do, he ſhall reſt from all his Labours, *Job* 7.

Whenever the Phyſician viſits the Patient, or when the Chirurgeon dreſſes the Wounds, let them conſider, that they have no Secret or Art able to protect them from Death, or to cure the Breaches that it makes in our corruptible Nature.

Let the moſt cunning Lawyers, the moſt adviſed Counſellors and the moſt eloquent Orators, remember that all their Rhetorick and Subtilty will never obtain for them their Suit againſt Death, nor procure a Moment of Reſpite or Delay.

And let the moſt learned Philoſophers learn, *That the Soundeſt Philoſophy is the Meditation of Death.*

In ſhort, What ever be our Imployment, Condition, or Age, let us lift up our Minds and Hands unto God, to ſpeak to him in the Language of the Prophet *David*; *Lord, let me know my end, and the Number of my days, that I may know how long I am to live.* Or of *Moſes*, *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto Wiſdom.*

A Prayer and Meditation on our Mortality.

O *My God and Heavenly Father, ſince 'tis thy Pleaſure, that I ſhould be mortal, and that my Body ſhould return to the Duſt; Grant me Grace to be always mindful of my frail Condition, and ſeriouſly to reflect upon the ſeveral Changes of Times, the Variety of Seaſons, the Unconſtancy of the World, and Alterations I meet with, as* Memento's *of my laſt Change and Departure. Let my Infirmities and frequent*

frequent Distempers be look't upon as so many Messengers sent to summon and warn me that I must shortly leave this Tabernacle. Let the Bed I rest on call to my mind, that when all the business of my Life shall be finished, I must lye down and rest in a Bed of Dust. Let the Garments that I cast off at Night, the Sleep that benums my Senses, the Tombs of my Predecessors, Forefathers and Friends, refresh in me the thoughts of my departure to my last Home. Gracious God, give me Grace so often to look upon Death and the Grave, that I may be acquainted with them, and that they may not fright or terrify, but comfort me; for tho' I know that I am born to die, I know also this, that Death shall introduce me into the Presence of my God the only Author of Life and Happiness, to live for ever with him in Bliss. Amen.

CHAP. VIII.

The Second Remedy against the Fears of Death, is to expect it at every Moment.

'TIS not sufficient to think often upon Death, and to discourse of it in a Pathetick manner; and there be some that frequently mention Death with many pious Reflections; yet nevertheless they cannot boast of being free from all Apprehensions of it. Their Tongue is always ready to speak of Death, but their Heart cannot yield to expect it. They know that Death will seize upon them, but they entertain this dangerous Opinion, that the Time is not yet come; they acknowledge that they are indebted to God and Nature, but they delay the Payment of the Debt from day to day, as if they were able to corrupt the Serjeants of Death, and obtain a Reprieve at their Pleasure. There is no Man so old and decrepit, but flatters himself with the fansie of having as yet at least a Year to live in the World. In short we imagine always, that we perceive Death at a vast Distance from us, and that

that we ſhall at our leiſure prepare our ſelves to receive it as we ought. Therefore when ever, or where-ever it comes to drag us out of the World, it ſurprizeth and aſtoniſheth us.

To prevent this Miſchief, we muſt not only conſider that we are mortal, but that our Life is ſhort and of no long Continuance; we muſt continually ſay with *Job*. *Are not my days few?* Job 10. And imprint in our minds this Sentence of *David*, *The Lord hath made my days as an hand-breadth, mine age is as nothing before him*, Pſal. 39. Or that of *Moſes*, *the beſt of our days are but labour and ſorrow, for they are ſoon cut off, and we fly away.* Pſal. 90.

The Ancients painted *Time* with Wings, to expreſs its unavoidable Swiftneſs. The Holy Spirit compares our Life to a Weaver's Shuttle, to an hired Servant, to a Poſt that runs apace, to a Packet-Boat, or to an Eagle that flies after its Prey. The Scared Writers ſpeak of our Life as of a Torrent of Waters, of a Cloud, a Vapour, a Wind or a Breath. They tell us that our days are gone as a Dream, they fly away as a Shadow, they vaniſh as a Word in the Air, and that they periſh as a Thought. In a word, all the Lighteſt and the moſt unconſtant things of the World, whereof the Motion is very ſuddain and quick, are employed in Holy Scripture, to expreſs the Vanity of our Life and ſhortneſs of our days.

Beſides that, our Life is of a ſhort Continuance, it ſlides away inſenſibly, like a Clock, the Wheels move without ceaſing, altho' the Hand appears to us to be ſteady; or to a Plant that grows continually, altho' the Increaſe and Growth is not to be diſcern'd by our Eye-ſight; or like to a Man who ſtands in a Ship under Sail, he goes forward whether he will or no. Thus whether we Sleep or Wake, whether we Go or Lye down, whether we Eat or Faſt, whether we Work or Reſt, we proceed on continually forward towards our Grave. Our Body is like a Tree eaten continually by Worms for Day and Night they feed upon

upon it without intermission. In vain do ye banish out of your minds the thoughts of Death; if ye will not call it to your remembrance, it will not fail to mind and remember you. The more ye fly from it, the more it follows and persues you at the heels; and when ye imagine Death to be fartheſt off from you, 'tis neareſt to you.

As the Cancer when it infects and enters into the Breaſt, devours the Fleſh without Interruption; ſo *Time* conſumes and devours us continually. The Meat that we ſwallow, and nouriſheth us, brings us by degrees into the Embraces of Death, as the Oyl that cauſeth a Lamp to burn, brings it to an end; or as when a Torch is lighted, it begins to decay, as ſoon as it begins to burn; thus I may ſay without miſtake, that the very firſt moment of this Animal Life, is the firſt moment of our Death. As we ſay of all ſublunary Bodies, that the Generation of the one is the Corruption of the other; So 'tis with *Time*, the Birth of one Hour, of a Day, of a Week, of a Month, of a Year, is the End of that which precedes. 'Tis like a Wheel that mounts to no other end, but to fall down again.

Since therefore our Life is nothing elſe but a continued Death, in proper Terms, we are miſtaken to name only the moment of the ſeparation of the Soul and Body, the hour of Death. For as when many Cannon ſhot are charg'd againſt a Caſtle to open a Breach, we don't ſay that the laſt hath done the Work: Or as when an hard Stone is cut with a Chiſſel and Hammer, or inſenſibly carv'd or undermin'd with Water the laſt blow, or drop don't carry away alone the Glory of the Performance: Thus when our Bodies decay and crumble away to Duſt, we muſt not only conſider the laſt ſtruglings againſt Death, or the laſt Attempt of this Enemy. Of a Ladder where we aſcend and deſcend, we view every ſtep from the top to the bottom: Of an Hour-glaſs we look to every Grain of Sand; Of a Journey, we reckon the firſt League, as well as the laſt; and in a Race, we take notice of the firſt ſtep that we

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go out as well as that when we ſtopt: Thus we muſt reckon our Death to begin from the firſt Moment that we draw our Breath, until the laſt when we yield up the Ghoſt.

Beſides what happens every Moment to this poor and deſpicable Nature, an infinite Number of ſtrange, unluky, and uexpected Accidents, ſtop and ſhorten our Race. The Taper is not always conſum'd by its own Flame, many unkind Blaſts and Showers extinguiſh it. If our Life is ſhort, 'tis no leſs weak and uncertain. The Body in which we lead a languiſhing Life, is like *Jonas*'s Gourd: For if it be but mov'd with a contrary and unwholeſome Wind, or touched by an unhappy Worm, it withers upon a ſudden, *Jonas* 4. This was the Thoughts of *Eliphaz* when he ſaith, *We dwell in Houſes of Clay, our Foundation is in the Duſt, we are cruſhed before the Moth*, Job 4. When God intends to deſtroy Mankind in his Wrath, and kill Multitudes in his Diſpleaſure, he doth not always commiſſion an Angel as his Agent, as in the Caſe of the Firſt-born of *Egypt*; as when he ſtretched forth the Sword of his Vengeance upon *Jeruſalem*, and as when he cut off *Sennacherib*'s Army in one Night, one hundred fourſcore and five thouſand Men. He doth not always let looſe the wicked Spirits, as when he gave them leave to raiſe a furious Tempeſt, which caſt to the Ground the Houſe where *Job*'s Children were buried in the Ruins, *Job* 1. He opens not always the Fountains of Heaven, as when he waſhed away the firſt wicked World with a fearful Deluge, *Gen.* 7. He cauſeth not always Fire and Brimſtone to rain from Heaven, as upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, upon *Admah* and *Zeboim*. He works not always Miracles in the Waters, as when he drowned *Pharoah* and his *Egyptian* Hoſt in the Waters of the *Red Sea*. He prepares not always Whales to devour us, as he did *Jonas*. He ſends not always Burning-ing Serpents, as to the murmuring Generation of *Iſraelites* in the Deſarts. He commands not always the Earth to open and ſwallow us up, as he did *Corah*, *Dathan*

and

and *Abiram*. He ſends not always from above great Hailſtones, as when he knockt down the *Amorites*. He deſtroys not always by Flames that proceed from his Preſence, as he did *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who offered unhallowed Fire upon his Altar. He commands not always the Lions and the Bears of the Foreſt to iſſue out and devour us, as he did when the rebellious Prophet was kill'd, and when the ill-tutor'd Children of *Bethel* mockt *Eliſha*. In ſhort, God imploys not always the Plagues and Judgments of Peſtilence, of War, and of Famine; the unpleaſant ſmell of a fuming Snuff, a flying Vapour of a malignant Smoak, is able to choak or kill us in a moment, a Fly, the Kernel of an Apple, an Hair of the Head, or the Seed of a Grape, or Aſhes, or Sand, or ſome other Atom, may ſtop the breath of our Life. Therefore God adviſeth us by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Ceaſe ye from Man whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Iſa. 2.

'Tis to be conſidered that theſe Contingencies happen very frequently, and in every place Death lays for us its Snares, as well in the Boſom of our tender hearted Parents, and in the embraces of our deareſt Friends, as amongſt our moſt mortal Enemies. Its inviſible Darts fly every where; and as the Pſalmiſt informs us, *The Peſtilence walketh in darkneſs, and deſtruction waſteth at noon-day*, Pſal. 91. Death is as buſie on the Solemn Feſtivals, as well as in the working days; it drags us as eaſily from the Table where we take our Delights as from the Bed of Sorrow, where we ſigh and groan. There is no ſacred Retreat where we may find a Refuge; it hath no more Regard of the Temples dedicated to God's Service, than of the common Houſes. All the Riches of *America*, and the Power of the greateſt Monarch, are not able to protect us from its Purſuit; it requires a preſent Payment of the Debts that we owe, and 'tis not poſſible to appear by Deputy at the Summons that it ſends to us.

Death claps his Summons on the poſts of the door, it truſts them not in the hands of Meſſengers or Lacquies; there is no Warning, but it may write down upon it theſe words, *Speaking to him in Perſon.* It ſurpriſeth us at home and abroad, in our Cloſets, and in the Streets, in our Beds, in our Sedans, in the midſt of our Feaſts, and all our Pomp. It offers Violence to the Sacred Perſon of the greateſt Kings in their moſt ſumptuous Palaces, in their moſt flouriſhing Cities, in their ſtrongeſt Fortifications, in the midſt of their moſt faithful Subjects, and moſt victorious Armies, upon their Thrones, and in their Triumphant Chariots. As King *Ahab* when he was going to take Poſſeſſion of *Naboth*'s Vineyard, told the Prophet *Elijah* in a rage, *Haſt thou found me, mine Enemy?* 1 Kings 21. Thus when the prophane Worldlings dream of nothing but of the pleaſant Enjoyment of their unjuſt Poſſeſſions, and ſwimming in the Blood and Sweat of the meanner People, they meet unexpected Death, which they curſe in their Hearts, and if it did not ſtop their Mouths, they would ſay alſo in a rage, *Haſt thou found me out mine Enemy?*

This Holy Meditation cauſed the beſt King upon Earth to tell us, *Man knoweth not his time, as the Fiſhes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in a ſnare, ſo are the Sons of Men ſnar'd in an evil time, when it falls ſuddenly upon them,* Eccleſ. 9. 12. This ſame Conſideration cauſed this excellent Sentence to be written in the Book of *Job*, *In a moment ſhall they die, and the People ſhall be troub'led at midnight, and paſs away, and the mighty ſhall be taken without hand,* Job 34. That is, that to deſtroy Kingdoms and whole Nations, and to carry away the moſt luſty and mighty Men, Death hath no need of any other Aſſiſtance, but its own Arm.

Do you deſire, Chriſtian Reader, to underſtand the reſult of all this Diſcourſe? let me tell you, that ſince Death is certain, and not to be avoided, and that there is nothing ſo uncertain as the hour of its Arrival, we ought ſo to live, as if we were to breath forth the

laſt gaſp at every moment. We ſhould behave our ſelves, as if we had always our Souls upon our Lips, ready to yield them into the Hands of our great Creator, and to ſpeak in *Job*'s Language, *Having our fleſh between our teeth, and our Souls in our hands*, Job 13. In regard we know not at what time, nor in what place Death intends to come upon us, let us expect it at every moment, and in every place. And as we lodge in this earthly Tabernacle, without any term prefixt, let us be ready to depart at the firſt warning. For it will be far better for us to go out willingly, than to be dragg'd out againſt our will. 'Tis not convenient that Death ſhould carry us away in the ſame manner as the Sea beats and toſſeth a dead Corps upon its Waves. But we muſt in this occaſion imitate the diſcreet Mariner, that trims his Sails, and helps by his Art the Winds and the Tide to carry him to his deſired Haven. We ſhould not follow Death as the Malefactor follows the Executioner who drags him to ſuffer; but as the Child follows his Father who conducts him to a Feaſt. We ſhould not engage in a Combat with Death by conſtraint, as the Ancient Slaves with the wild Beaſts in the *Roman* Amphitheatres; but we ſhould imitate *David*'s Courage, who, of his own accord, marched out of the Camp of *Iſrael*, to fight with *Goliah*: 'Tis better for us to attack and ſeize upon Death, than to be ſurpriſed and devoured by it unawares.

Come when thou wilt, O Death! thou ſhalt never ſurprize me; for I wait for thee at every moment, with my weapons ready in my hand. Thou ſhalt never drag me forcibly, for I will follow thee willingly and joyfully. Tho' thou art my Enemy, yet will I ſpeak to thee in the Language of the Spouſe, in the *Canticles*, to her beloved, *Draw me and I will run after thee.* Nay, I will meet thee in the way, and receive thee with hearty Embraces; for inſtead of dreading thy coming, I deſire it paſſionately, and hope for it. For at thy firſt arrival, as ſoon as I have ſeen thee, I ſhall overcome thee, O bleſſed and happy Day, that promiſeth me ſuch a glorious Victory, and ſuch an eternal Triumph. A

A Prayer and Meditation upon the continual Expectation of Death.

O *Gracious God, in whoſe Power alone, and at whoſe Pleaſure are the Times and the Seaſons; I know that 'tis appointed to all Men once to die, and that the Grave is the Dwelling which thou haſt prepared to receive all Mankind. We underſtand ſufficiently by the Experience of former Ages, that none is able to ſay,* I ſhall live, and ſhall not ſee Death. *Thou, O Almighty God, our ſupreme Judge, haſt pronounced our irrevocable Sentence in the Earthly Paradiſe, that we muſt die: ſo that I ſhould be guilty of the greateſt Folly, if I did not firmly believe that I muſt die as others, and follow at my turn in the way of all Fleſh. But, Lord, thou haſt been pleaſed to hide from us the Iſſues of thy Providence, and doſt not ſuffer us to ſee the Hand that marks out the laſt Hours of our Life. We can perceive no ſhadow to diſcover to us with certainty, when ſhall be the going down of our Sun; we know not at what hour of the Day or of the Night thou wilt call us to appear before thy great Tribunal. Give me therefore Grace, O merciful God, to be always ready to anſwer to thy Call, and to obey thy Holy Commands; that I may be as a Ship at Anchor, that ſtays only for a Wind to ſet ſail; or as a Soldier who waits only for the Signal to march to the Encounter. Give me Grace, O good Lord, that I may be like the good and faithful Servant, who expects his Maſter's coming, and hears his Voice as ſoon as he calls; or like the wiſe Virgins, who were ready to meet the Bridegroom, and to follow him into the Marriage Chamber. Since I am not to know, either the Time or the Place when Death will come to me, O that I might expect and wait for it every moment, and at every place! O that I might live in ſuch a manner, as if I were always ready to die. That my Soul were always upon my Lips, prepared to fly away. That I were continually in readineſs to commit it into thy Hands. O my God, my Faithful and Merciful Creator! by this means I ſhall receive Death with Joy,*

when it comes as thy Servant and Messenger; and I shall follow it willingly, being certainly persuaded that it will lead me into eternal Life, and transport me into thy glorious and immortal Palace. Amen.

CHAP. IX.

The Third Remedy against the Fears of Death, is to consider, that God hath appointed the Time and Manner of our Death.

WE are either Hypocrites, who draw near unto God with our Lips, and honour him with our Tongues whilst our Heart is far from him, *Matt.* 14. Or we must desire the Accomplishment of the Will of God, and resign our selves wholly to it; for every day we say unto him in our Prayers, *Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.* Therefore we cannot abhor nor fly from Death, so cowardly, if we be rightly persuaded as we ought, That God hath limited the Time, and appointed the Manner of our Death. That which causes us to complain of this last Enemy, is a continual Eye that we have fixed upon the Power of the Flesh, and a too great Confidence upon second Causes. We are like the Dog that bites at the stone that strikes him, for we commonly curse the means that God employs to call and withdraw us out of the World.

It will easily appear that God hath number'd our days, and that by his wonderful and eternal Wisdom, he hath decreed the hour and moment of every Man's Death. For besides what our Saviour Christ saith in general, *That God hath reserv'd the times and the seasons in his own power,* Acts 1. *Job.* tells us expressly, *The days of Man are determin'd, the number of his Months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass,* Job 14. The Royal Prophet speaks to the same purpose in the 31. Psalm, *I trusted in thee, O Lord, I*

said

ſaid, thou art my God, my times are in thy Hand. He is of ſame Judgment in the 19 Pſalm, *Behold, thou haſt made my Days as a Hand-breadth.* And in the 68 Pſalm, *Unto God the Lord belong the Iſſues of Death. Moſes* teacheth us the ſame Leſſon in his divine Hymn, *Pſal.* 90. for when he had repreſented, how that it is God who reduceth Man to Aſhes, and maketh him return to his firſt Subſtance; he tells us, ſpeaking unto God, *Thou turneſt Man to Deſtruction, and ſayeſt, return again, ye Children of Men.*

King *Hezekiah*'s Compariſon is very notable, he compares the Life of Man to a Thread that God hath twiſted, and that he cuts off at his pleaſure, *Iſa.* 38. Mine Age is departed, and remov'd from me as a Shepherd's Tent; I have cut off, like a Weaver, my Life, he will cut me off with pining Sickneſs, from Day even to Night wilt thou make an end of me. *Hannah, Samuel*'s Mother, removes all Difficulty, and confirms this truth ſufficiently, 2 Sam. 2. *'Tis God,* ſaith ſhe, *who killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.* There is nothing more ſignificant to the ſame purpoſe, than our Lord and Saviour's Words, *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore,* Amen, *and have the Keys of Hell and of Death,* Revel. This great God and Saviour cloſeth the Gates of the Grave when he pleaſeth, and 'tis not poſſible to open them againſt his Will; In ſhort, *Whether we live, we live to the Lord, whether we die, we die to the Lord, whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's,* Rom. 14.

And our Reaſon being enlightened with Divine Revelation, teacheth us this good and profitable Leſſon; for if God hath a Hand in our Conception and Birth, and if he appoints the time of our entrance into the World, wherefore ſhould not he alſo have an Hand in our Death, and mark out the time of our Departure, *David* ſpeaks thus to God in the 139 Pſalm, *My ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt part of the Earth, thine*

Eyes did ſee my ſubſtance, yet being imperfect, and in thy book, all my members are written, which in continuance, were faſhion'd, when as yet there was none of them. We may therefore ſpeak unto God in the ſame Language; my Subſtance will not be hid from thee, when this miſerable Body ſhall fall to Pieces, as rotten Wood, and as a Moth-eaten Garment; thine Eyes ſhall ſee me, when Death ſhall cut off the Thred of my Life, and ſeparate what thou haſt joined together, ſo wonderfully by thy Power and Wiſdom: Thy Providence ſhall diſpoſe of me at my departure, and nothing ſhall happen to me, but that which thou haſt fore-ordained in thine unſearchable Decrees.

If God appoints the time of our Reſurrection, and if it be certain, that without his expreſs Commiſſion, the Holy Spirit will not breath upon our dead Bones, to cauſe them to revive; 'tis not probable that our Breath ſhould depart out of our Noſtrils, and our Bodies ſhould fall into the Bed of Corruption, without the Orders of the great and living God, *Ezekiel* 37. He hath appointed the Sun its Courſe, and to the Stars that ſhine in the Heavens, their ſeveral Motions and Stations, *Iſa.* 40. And ſhould he not alſo appoint to his Children their Motions, ſince they are to ſhine for ever in the Heaven of Heavens, where Righteouſneſs dwells as ſo many immortal Stars? He hath meaſured the Water in his Hand; he hath compaſſed the Heavens with his Span; he hath weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills with a Balance; he hath faſhioned the Earth with his Hands, and given bounds to the roaring Sea; and is it poſſible that he hath not meaſured the time of our Life, and that he hath not marked out with his Finger the laſt moment. He who hath numbred the Kingdom of the Heathen Princes; hath he not alſo numbred the Days in the which he intends to Reign in our Hearts by his Holy Spirit; hath he not appointed the time for us to aſcend up into the higheſt Heavens, where we are to reign with him in the Kingdom of his Glory?

If it be certain that God hath numbred the Hairs of our Head, *Matth.* 10. 'tis not to be doubted, but that he hath alſo numbred the Days of our Life. And if a Sparrow fall not to the ground without his Order, how can it be that a Man can take his flight up to Heaven without his expreſs Commiſſion? He bottles up our Tears he keeps a Record of all our Afflictions, and takes and Account of our Sorrows, *Pſal.* 50. and can we imagine that he doth not keep an Account of the Life and Death of Men, and that he minds not the time that we are to ſpend in the Valley of Tears? He takes notice of our up-riſing, and of our down ſitting, he compaſſeth thee round about whither thou doſt ſtop or go, *Pſ.* 59. And can it be conceiv'd, but that he obſerves thy riſing at thy Birth, the ſeveral Paſſages of thy Life, and thy going down at thy Death?

In ſhort, if God hath appointed in his eternal Council, the continuance of the great World; he hath alſo, without doubt, limited the Life of Man, the little World, and the Image and Compendium of the great. As our Lord and Saviour teacheth us. Man is not able by his ſollicitous care to add one Cubit to his Stature, and our Experiance ſufficiently demonſtrates, that we cannot add a Year, a Day, or a Moment, by all our Labour and Induſtry, to the continuance of our Life.

If Life and Death were not in God's Hand, there would be nothing ſettled, nor conſtant, either in the Kingdoms of the World, or in the Church of Chriſt. The Prophets would be often found in grievous Errors, and the eternal Election would be totally aboliſh'd; for the moſt weighty Affairs of a Commonwealth, depend upon the Life of Princes. The Death of one Man is able to turn an Empire upſide down, and to change the State of the Kingdom. If *Alexander* the Great had been ſtifled in his Cradle, what would become of the Propheſie of *Daniel*, who declared the glorious Victories that this Prince ſhould obtain againſt King *Darius*, the *Perſian* Monarch, under the Emblem of an He-Goat that ſhould run at a Ram with all his might?

that ſhould break his two horns, and trample him under his Feet? And if King *Cyrus* had died before the obtaining of the Kingdom of *Babylon*, how ſhould *Iſaiah*'s Prophecy be accompliſh'd? for he paints out this Young Conqueror in his moſt lively Colours, and calls him by his Name in this Expreſſion, *I have ſaid of* Cyrus, *he is my Shepherd, and ſhall perform all my pleaſure, even ſaying to* Jeruſalem, *Thou ſhalt be built, and to the Temple, Thy Foundation ſhall be laid,* Iſaiah 44.

If the Devil could have taken away St. *Paul*'s Life, before his Journey to *Damaſcus*, where he was ſtrangely converted by a Miracle, how could God's immutable Decree be accompliſh'd? for he had deſigned him from his Mother's Womb, to be a noble Veſſel of his Grace and Mercy, and a Faithful Embaſſador of his Son, *Gal.* 1. If the good Thief had died before he had ſeen the Light, or if he had been kill'd in one of his Robberies, how could he have been converted upon the Croſs, where he repented of his Crimes? Or how could he have heard from our Saviour theſe Bleſſed and Comfortable Words, *Verily I ſay unto thee, Thou ſhalt be with me this day in Paradiſe!* Luke 31.

The Heathens have perceived and underſtood this Truth, but they have darkned and defac'd it by their impertinent and ridiculous Fictions; for their Poets tell us, that there are three *Parcæ*, or infernal Goddeſſes, the one holds the Diſtaff and Spins, the other winds up the Thread, the third cuts it, and puts a period thereby to the Life of Man. By this Fable they intend to teach us, that God lengthens or ſhortens at his pleaſure Man's Life. As it is therefore certain that God hath numbred our Days; he hath alſo appointed, in his infinite Wiſdom, the means to convey us out of the World. If one dieth in Peace, another is kill'd in War; if one departs in his Bed, another hangs upon a Gibbit; if one periſhes with Famine, and another is ſtifled with the Plague; if one is ſtruck with the Thunder, and the other is torn in pieces by wild Beaſts; if one is choak'd in the Waters, and the other periſheth in the Flames;

in ſhort, if the Separation of the Soul from the Body, happens in a different manner, 'tis not without the expreſs Leave and Orders of our Heavenly Father. Therefore when we ſee the ſtrangeſt Accidents come to paſs, and the moſt unexpected and tragick Deaths before our Eyes, we muſt remember the ſaying of the Prophet *Jeremy*, when he ſaw the Burning and Plunder of *Jeruſalem*, *Who is he that ſaith, and it cometh to paſs when the Lord commandeth it not? Out of the Mouth of the moſt high proceedeth not evil and good?* Lam. 3. We muſt then conſider with the Prophet *Iſaiah*, That 'tis God that creates the Light and Darkneſs, and that ſends Proſperity and Adverſity, *Iſaiah* 15. 45. Or with *Amos*, who enquires whether *there be any evil in the City and the Lord hath not done it*, Amos 3. That is to ſay, that there is no Affliction nor Death that happens, but God hath appointed it, and fore-ordain'd it by his wiſe Providence. If the Devil cannot deſtroy *Job*'s Flock of Sheep, nor hurry headlong into the Sea, the Herds of Swine without his Leave, who holds him faſt in Chains, *Matth.* 8. Let us perſwade our ſelves, that all the Powers of Hell and the World cannot cauſe us to die by a violent Death, if God hath not ordain'd it before in the Reſolutions of his infinite Wiſdom. So that if at any time a Prince, or a Magiſtrate ſpeaks to us in *Pilate*'s Language to our Saviour, *Knoweſt thou not that I have power to crucifie thee, and power to ſave thee?* John 16. Being ſtrengthned with an Holy Confidence, let us anſwer him as our Saviour; *Thou ſhouldeſt not have that power over me; were it not given to thee from above.* Without the leave and the pleaſure of my God, thou can'ſt not take from me an Hair of my Head.

We read in the Book of *Judges*, that when *Abimelech* aſſaulted the Tower of *Thebez*, with a Reſolution to win it upon a ſudden, a Woman caſt from the top a piece of a Milſtone, that fell upon his Head, and broke his Skull, *Judg.* 9. If we look only upon the Second Cauſes, this Accident may appear to be ſtrange, and unexpected, but we muſt lift up our Eyes to the Almighty Hand of

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an all-ſeeing Power and Wiſdom, far more dexterous than that of this poor Woman. For the ſame Relation declares, that God by this means brought to paſs *Jotham*'s Prophecy, and *rendered the Wickedneſs of* Abimelech, *which he did unto his Father, in ſlaying his ſeventy Brethren with his unmerciful Hand,* upon his own guilty Head.

Ahab King of *Iſrael*, was diſguiſed, with a deſign to fight with the *Syrians*, 1 *Kings* 22. An unknown Soldier lets fly by chance an Arrow out of his Bow, which ſtruck him in the weakeſt part of his Armour, wounded him to Death, and the Dogs licked the Blood that iſſued out of his Wounds. At this ſight a carnal and earthly Mind may ſay, that this was but an accident of War; but the Spirit of God informs us better, that this happened to fulfil the Prophecy of *Elijah*, and the dreadful Threatnings which he had pronounc'd againſt this wicked Prince, who laboured by tyrannical and deviliſh means, to invade other Mens Poſſeſſions; *Thus ſaith the Lord, in the place where Dogs lick'd up the Blood of* Naboth, *ſhall dogs lick thy Blood, even thine,* 1 Kings 21.

When we caſt our Eyes upon the Tragical Death of *Joſias* King of *Juda*; at the firſt ſight it appears, but the Effect of the boiling heat of Youth, which carried him againſt Reaſon obſtinately to fight with *Pharoah Neco* King of *Egypt*; or of the Strength and ſwiftneſs of his Enemies according to the Complaint of *Jeremiah* the Prophet, *Our Perſecutors are ſwifter than the Eagles of the Heaven, they purſue us upon the Mountains, they laid wait for us in the Wilderneſs; the breath of our Noſtril, the Anointed of the Lord was taken in their pits, of whom we ſaid, under this ſhadow we will live among the Heathen,* Lam. 4. But to underſtand the Truth, we muſt enter farther into the Sanctuary, and adore the Wiſdom of God's Decree, that had reſolv'd to take away this good and religious Prince into eternal Reſt, and beſtow upon him a more noble and a richer Crown, before he took in hand the Sword of Vengeance to puniſh the People

People of *Iſrael*, for the many Idolatries, and horrid Crimes, of which they had been guilty; by this means God fulfilled the Prophecy of *Hulda*, *Behold, I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou ſhalt be gather'd into thy grave in Peace, and thine Eyes ſhall not ſee all the Evil which I will bring upon this place*, 2 Kings 22.

When we look upon the Death and Paſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we may Imagine at the firſt view, that only the Phariſees Envy, *Judas*'s Treaſon, the Mutiny of the rude Rabble, *Pilate*'s Injuſtice, *Herod*'s Jeſts, and the Cruelty of the *Roman* Soldiers, were the cauſes of this Tragedy. But the Holy Apoſtles *Peter* and *John*, unto whom our Saviour had diſcovered the rareſt Secrets of his Wiſdom, conſider the outward Agents but as the Inſtruments to bring God's great Deſign, Man's Redemption to paſs. Therefore to ſpeak of it in this manner in the fourth of the *Acts*, *Againſt thine Holy Child Jeſus whom thou haſt anointed, both* Herod *and* Pontius Pilate, *with the Gentiles and the People of* Iſrael *were gather'd together, to do whatſoever thine hand and thy Counſel determin'd to be done.*

If it happens that a Friend unadviſedly ſtrikes another; If in a Wood where he is felling Timber, the Head of the Axe ſhould ſlip out of the Handle, and kill the deareſt Friend of the Agent; there can be nothing imagin'd to be more caſual in regard of the ſecond Cauſes, *Exod.* 21. But God declares in expreſs terms, that he cauſed ſuch an one to be under the hand of his Friend who killed him againſt his will. To ſecure the innocent Author of the unexpected Murther, God appointed Cities of Refuge for ſuch to fly to, *Numb.* 35.

As when the hour of our Death is come, all the Riches of the World cannot pay our Ranſom; all the Wiſdom of the moſt prudent Councils, or Strength of a Kingdom, are not able to free us from the Power of Death. On the contrary, when it pleaſeth God to ſhelter and preſerve our Life, all the Subtilty and Cunning of the Devil, all the Power and Fury of the World cannot take it from us.

Eſau in his rage, full of Vengeance and Diſpleaſure againſt his Brother, reſolves to kill him; on purpoſe to accompliſh this cruel Deſign he goes to meet him with four hundred Men. But God who holds in his hand the Hearts of all the Men in the World; God, who turns the ſtony Rocks into Fountains of Water, and the Flints into the Rivers of Oyl, forced out of this hardned Heart Tears of Compaſſion and Love. The ſame *Eſau*, inſtead of drawing out his Sword againſt his Brother, embraced him with Expreſſions of Kindneſs, kiſſed and wept over him.

Jacob's Sons had wickedly intended to deſtroy their Brother *Joſeph*, they were ready to imbrue their cruel hands in the Blood of this innocent Lamb; but by a ſecret and moſt wonderful Providence, God ſtopt their helliſh Deſign. This great and Sovereign Monarch of the whole World, who draws Light out of Darkneſs, made uſe of their moſt damnable malice and hatred, to accompliſh his good Purpoſe, and to raiſe his Servant to a conſiderable Degree of Honour and Glory, which was prepared for him. Theſe inhumane Souls full of Envy and Diſpleaſure, conſpired together, how to hinder the fulfilling of *Joſeph*'s Dream. But contrary to their Intention, they made way, and were inſtrumental to the Accompliſhment of that which God had revealed to his Prophet; therefore when his Brethren were afraid leſt he ſhould revenge himſelf upon them, when he had Power in his Hand, he anſwered them with an Heart full of Charity and Love, *Am I in the Place of God? As for you, ye thought evil againſt me, but God meant it unto good*, Gen. 50.

David, a Man after God's own Heart, fell into many fearful Dangers, ſo that he was reduc'd oft times to the very Gates of Death; but God preſerv'd his Soul from the Grave, his Eyes from Tears, and his Feet from falling, *Pſal.* 116. In the Wilderneſs of *Mahon* King *Saul* had ſurrounded him with his Men on every ſide, ſo that no help nor ſuccour was to be expected from

from Man, 2 *Sam.* 23. but by a wonderful Providence God deliver'd him; for when he was ready to be caught, a Meſſenger comes to inform *Saul, make haſt and come, for the* Philiſtines *are entred into thy Land.* So that neither the inhumane Perſecutions of this Tyrant, nor the abominable Plotting of his unnatural Sons, nor the Tumults and Revolt of the People, nor the moſt furious Tempeſts of Hell and the World, have ever been able to extinguiſh his Life before the Time appointed. When he had ſpent all the Days allotted to him by God's good Providence, he fell aſleep as a Man that lays himſelf down to reſt quietly, after a long and laborious Task.

Queen *Jezabel* was enrag'd againſt the Prophet *Elijah*, ſhe had ſworn by her Gods, that he ſhould ſurely be put to Death; but by a Miracle, God kept him out of the bloody Hands of this incarnate Devil; and by another Miracle he preſerv'd from Famine and Hunger, him whom he had before preſerved from *Jezabel*'s Sword and Fury; he ſent the Ravens to feed him with Bread and Meat, Morning and Evening; and for his ſake, God encreaſed the Widow of *Serapta*'s Oyl and Meal. When he was ready to be famiſhed in the Wilderneſs, he diſpached an Angel to him, to carry him Meat and Drink. In ſhort, all the Storms that the Devil raiſed againſt him, could not deſtroy his Life; ſo that when God had reſolved to crown his Labours, he fetched him away in a Chariot of Fire, and carried him up into Heaven.

The *Syrians* were reſolv'd to take the Prophet *Eliſha*, becauſe he diſcovered their moſt ſecret Counſels, and fruſtrated all their Deſigns, therefore they beſieg'd the Town of *Dothan*, to ſeize upon this Man of God. When his Servants beheld the dreadful number of Horſes, and Chariots, that ſurrounded that weak City, he cried out in a fright, alas, Maſter, what ſhall we do? And he anſwered, fear not, for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them, 2 *Kings* 16. At theſe words

of

of *Eliſha*, the Eyes of the poor Man were open'd, and he ſaw an innumerable Company of Chariots of Fire and Horſes of Fire, that God had ſent from Heaven, to guard his Servant the Prophet.

The *Jews* often plotted againſt our Saviour Chriſt, and attempted to kill him, *John* 10. They came ſo near to the Execution of their bloody Deſign, as to take up Stones to caſt at him, and knock him down; as to bring him to the ſides of an high Mountain, to throw him headlong, but he always eſcap'd out of their Hands, and paſſed through the midſt of them without any harm. 'Twas Impoſſible for them to lay hold of him when they had undertaken and reſolved it. The Reaſon that the Spirit of God gives, is becauſe *that his hour was not yet come*, John 7. 18.

The High Prieſt and the Sadducees were inflamed with a helliſh Fury againſt the Holy Apoſtles; they laid Hands on them, and caſt them into the Publick Priſons, *Acts* 5. But becauſe the time of their Martyrdom appointed by God, was not yet come; he ſent his Holy Angels to free them from their Chains, and to ſet them at Liberty. When King *Herod* ſaw that the *Jews* thirſted for the Blood of God's Servants, the Apoſtles, *Acts* 12. and that they delighted in their Execution, he cut off the Head of *James*, afterwards he took *Peter*, clapt him in Priſon and delivered him to four Quaternions of Soldiers, with intention to bring him to Execution after the Feaſt of *Eaſter*. But the hour was not yet come, in which this Holy Apoſtle was to be Crucified, for the Glory of him who was Crucified for his Salvation. Therefore the Night immediately before his deſigned Execution, *Peter* was ſleeping between two Soldiers, bound with two Chains, and the Keepers before the door. On a ſudden, a great Light ſhined in the Priſon, and the Angel of the Lord came and ſmote him on one ſide, and raiſed him up, ſaying,

ing, *Ariſe up quickly*; and his Chains fell from his Hands, and the Angel ſaid unto him, *Gird thy ſelf, and bind on thy Sandals*, and ſo he did; then he ſaith unto him, *Caſt thy Garment about thee, and follow me*; and he went out and followed him, and he knew not that it was true, which was done by the Angel, but thought he had ſeen a Viſion. But when they were paſt the firſt and ſecond Ward, they came to the Iron Gate, that opened of its own accord, and when they were paſſed thro' one Street the Angel departed from him; then *Peter* being come to himſelf, ſaid, *Now I know of a ſurety, that the Lord hath ſent his Angel, and hath deliver'd me out of the Hands of* Herod, *and from all the Expectation of the People of the* Jews.

In ſhort, when the hour is not yet come which God hath marked out and appointed to take unto himſelf his faithful Servants, there is no Miracle ſo great, but he will ſhew it for their ſake; he dries up the Seas, he ſtops the Lions Mouths, he denieth to the Fire its uſual heat, he keeps them alive in the midſt of the Floods and Flames, in the Whale's Belly, in the fiery Furnaces, and in the deepeſt Gulphs.

If we did not examine the Memorials of our Forefathers, and conſider the things that we have ſeen with our Eyes, and experienc'd from our Infancy, we ſhould find that the Means which God hath imploy'd, and which he doth daily imploy for our Deliverance, are no leſs wonderful than thoſe of former Ages. God's Arm is not ſhortned, his Almighty Power is not leſſened, he hath yet as much Authority as ever, upon Men and Devils, and Divine Providence is no leſs watchful for the Preſervation of ſuch as fear and worſhip him. If we had the Eye of the Soul as open as the Eyes of our Body; or if we could but perceive the things that are of themſelves inviſible, we ſhould ſee that God looks upon us continually with the Eye of his Love, and of his Fatherly Care, and that he covers us with his Hand, as with a Buckler of Proof, againſt all the Darts of the World and of Hell. We ſhould ſee

that

that we are encompaſſed about with a Wall of Fire, and that the Holy Angels guard us on every ſide. We ſhould then acknowledge, that 'tis God that holdeth our Soul in Life, and ſuffereth not our Feet to be moved, *Pſal.*60. And we ſhould cry out as *David*, *O God, who is like unto thee? thou who haſt ſhew'd me great and ſore troubles, ſhalt quicken me again, and bring me up again from the depths of the Earth; Thou ſhalt increaſe my greatneſs, and comfort me on every ſide*, Pſal. 71.

Altho' this wholeſome and moſt uſeful Doctrine be plainly taught in Holy Writ, and ſufficiently confirmed by ſo many Examples out of the Word of God; ſome there are that oppoſe it with many needleſs Objections.

In the firſt place they ſay, That God promiſeth length of Days to ſuch Children as are obedient to their Fathers and Mothers; from whence they think to infer, that our Life hath no certain time limited, that it is prolonged or ſhortned, as we prove Obedient or diſobedient to God, and his holy Laws. There is no difficulty to give an Anſwer to this Objection.

That in the Language of the Holy Spirit, the word that ſignifies there *to prolong*, ſignifies not always to make a thing longer than it was, or ſhould be, but only to make it of a long continuance. So that God promiſeth here, that the Children who ſhall obey his ſacred Laws, ſhall enjoy a longer Life than otherwiſe it ought to be, but only that he will do them the favour to let them live long and happy in this World. We may prove this Expoſition by St. *Paul*'s words, who paraphraſes this firſt Commandment of the ſecond Table in this manner, *Children, obey your Fathers and Mothers in the Lord, for it is juſt; Honour thy Father and thy Mother, which is the firſt Commandment, with promiſe that it may be well with thee, and that thou myeſt live long upon the Earth.* This Promiſe is to be underſtood with ſome Exception; if God ſhould judge it expedient for his Glory, and for the good of his Children. For

there

there are many Pious and Obedient Children, whom God withdraws out of the World, in the Flower of their Age, to give them an happier Life, which ſhall have no other limits than Eternity.

In the next Place, they alledged the remarkable Hiſtory of King *Hezekiah*, unto whom *Iſaiah* was ſent with this Meſſage, *Set thine Houſe in Order, for thou ſhalt die and not live.* Nevertheleſs God was entreated by his Peayers and Tears, and prevailed upon to ſuffer him to live longer. Therefore the Prophet told him, that God had added fifteen Years to his Days. To this Objection I anſwer,

That according to the ordinary Courſe of the World, and the Diſpoſition of the Natural Cauſes, *Hezekiah* was to die of that Diſeaſe. For the Scripture ſaith expreſly, That *Hezekiah* was ſick unto Death; That is to ſay, that his Diſeaſe was mortal in regard of the ſecond Cauſes, and the ordinary Courſe of Nature. Therefore theſe Words, *ſet thine Houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die and not live*, ought to be underſtood with this Exception; Thou ſhalt die, if I don't deliver thee by a Miracle, and if I don't employ mine Almighty Power to heal thee and reſtore thee to thy former Health.

This may be alſo underſtood in another manner, Thou ſhalt die if thou doſt not repent and turn unto me with Prayers and Tears. In the ſame ſence God cauſed it to be proclaimed in the Streets of *Nineveth, within forty days* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroyed.*

Let not any Man conclude from hence, that *Hezekiah*'s Repentance was the cauſe of the lengthening of his Days; and therefore that it was a Caſualty very uncertain. On the contrary, we may underſtand, that God who had appointed by his Eternal Decree, that this Wiſe and Religious Prince ſhould live beyond the Diſpoſition of his Body, had alſo reſolved to draw from his Heart Sighs and Groans, and Tears. from his Eyes; for God knew all his Works from Eternity. *Acts* 1.

Others argue against this Doctrine more impertinently: that if God hath numbered our Days, and prescribed to our Life its bounds, that it is in vain to take so much pains, and make so much ado about our Bodies distemper'd with Sickness; and that it is to little purpose to administer any Remedy to them, or to pray for the Recovery of their Health. In like manner, such may affirm, that 'tis to no purpose to eat or drink, and to hinder mad Persons from casting themselves down a Precipice, or from swallowing Poison, because they shall live neither more nor less than God hath ordained from all Eternity. This Objection may seem very plausible at the first, although it be most absurd, and so fooliſh that it must needs proceed from a great Ignorance or Malice. For 'tis not to be doubted, that when any one aims at an End, he designs and supposes by Consequence to attain unto it, by the ordinary means. For example, God hath appointed in his Eternal Council, to preserve *Jacob* and his Family from that Famine, that raged the Space of Seven Years; in order to that end, he sends *Joseph* into *Ægypt*, to gather up Provision the seven Years of Plenty. *Isaiah* the Prophet had told *Hezekiah* from God, that he should live the space of fifteen Years more; therefore he commanded him to apply to this Prince's Sores and Boils a lump of dried Figs. God had promised to *David*, that he should be King over the House of *Israel*; to confirm this Promise, he had been anointed with Oil, by the Prophet *Samuel*. This Promise don't hinder him from seeking the Means to preserve himself from *Saul*'s unjust Persecution. And when *Nathan* tells him, that God had agreed to establish his Posterity upon his Throne after him, this don't stop his Prayers, or cool his Devotion; on the contrary it was that which quickned him the more, and enflamed his Soul with Love and Thankfulness to God; therefore he expresseth himself in this manner, *O Lord of Hosts, God of* Israel, *thou hast revealed to thy Servant, saying, I will build thee an House,*

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therefore hath thy Servant found in his Heart to pray this Prayer unto thee, &c. 2 Sam. 7.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt knew for certain all that ſhould happen to him; nevertheleſs we find him ſpending the Days and Nights in Prayer, and when his Life was in danger, he neglected not the lawful and harmleſs means. He told his Apoſtles, *Are not two ſparrows ſold for a farthing? and one of them ſhall not fall to the ground without your Father; but the very hairs of your head are numbred.* This Conſideration hinders him not from commanding them, that when they are perſecuted in one City, they ſhould fly to another.

God had appointed to ſave St. *Paul*'s Life, and the Lives of all his Company; therefore he reveal'd it to him by an Angel; nevertheleſs, when he ſaw the Mariners ſeek to eſcape, he told the Centurion, *If theſe don't ſtay in the ſhip, you cannot be ſav'd*, Acts 27. In ſhort, the means and cauſes are ſubordinate to the End, in ſuch a manner that 'tis meer Folly and Extravagancy to offer to divide them, or ſuppoſe them to be contrary.

'Tis without reaſon that ſome bring the Hiſtory of King *Aſa* againſt this undoubted Truth. They affirm that this Prince was reprov'd for ſeeking to the Phyſicians in his Sickneſs. Theſe are the words of the Holy Scripture, *Aſa in the thirty ninth Year of his Reign was diſeas'd in his Feet, until his Diſeaſe was exceeding great; yet in his Diſeaſe he ſought not to the Lord, but to the Phyſicians*, 2 Chron. 1. The Spirit of God blames not this Prince becauſe he deſired the Aſſiſtance of Phyſicians; but becauſe he neglected to ſeek help of God, or to implore his Aid in the day of his diſtreſs. He that is ſick, may as freely take Phyſick, as he that is well may eat and drink. I confeſs, we muſt not altogether repoſe our confidence and truſt upon the Remedies, but rather upon God, who ſends both Sickneſs and Health. As Man doth not live by Bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the Mouth of God; ſo 'tis not by the Phyſick alone that a Patient is cur'd of his Diſtemper, but by the Bleſſing and Power of him

who gives the Wound, and binds it up; who ſtrikes and heals when he pleaſeth, *Job* 5. Therefore as we ought never to eat nor drink before we pray to God to vouchſafe his Bleſſing upon our Meat and Drink, that he may grant to them the virtue of recruiting the decayed Strength of our Bodies; likewiſe we ſhould never take any Phyſick, without lifting up our Hands to God for a Bleſſing, but that the Remedy may have the Strength to expel our Diſeaſe. All God's Creatures are good, when they are received with Thankſgiving, for they are ſanctified by the Word of God, and by Prayer, 1 *Tim.* 4.

Take notice here, how much ſuch Perſons are to be blamed, who when they lament for the loſs of their Friends or Kindred, inſtead of looking up to Heaven, look down upon Earth, and conſider nothing but the inferiour cauſe of their Grief; inſtead of adoring with all humility, the wiſe Providence of God, that diſpoſeth of all Worldly Events, and appoints the meanneſt Circumſtances; they fret and murmur, they delight to nouriſh in their Minds Diſpleaſure, that conſumes them, and break forth into many needleſs Complaints that ſerve but to open their Wounds, and to render them more miſerable. If he had not been in ſuch a Place, if he had not been engaged in ſuch a Way, if ſuch a Phyſician had not been called, or if another had been ſent; if this or that had not been done, if this Phyſick had not been adminiſtred to him, if leſs or more Blood had been taken from him, if he had been ſuffered to eat more Meat, or if leſs had been given, my Brother or my Siſter, my Wife, my Child, or my Husband, had been yet alive. It may be thou art miſtaken, Friend, the Diſeaſe could not be cured but by a Miracle; but when it ſhould be otherwiſe, we muſt nevertheleſs lift up our Eyes to God, and acknowledge his Finger with all reſpect; for oftimes he blinds the Phyſicians, ſo that they cannot underſtand the nature of the Diſeaſe, and ſuffers them to apply Remedies contrary to the Diſtemper. As God

threatens

threatens to take away the ſtaff of Bread, that is to ſay, the nouriſhing ſtrength and Virtue of the Bread. *Levit.* 26. Likewiſe he takes away his Bleſſing from the moſt Sovereign Remedies, and renders them altogether uſeleſs. 'Tis thus with all the other Accidents that happen to us, and that brings us to our Graves. For when it pleaſeth him to remove any Body out of the World, he ſuffers him to ſhut his Eyes to all the Light of Reaſon and Prudence, and to caſt himſelf headlong into the moſt apparent Danger. As when he deſign'd to deſtroy *Abſalom*, and to cut him off, he cauſed him to be led away by evil Counſel, and diſappointed the diſcreet and prudent Advice of *Achitophel*. Therefore ſince God hath appointed or fore-ordain'd before Man's Creation, the time and manner of his Death, at what Hour, in what Place, and by what means ſoever God calls away our Friends, or ſtrikes at our Perſon; 'tis always our Duty to poſſeſs our Souls with patience, and not to ſuffer the leaſt repining or deſpairing Word to proceed out of their Mouths.

If Death ſuddenly ſnatcheth away thy deareſt Children, or thy moſt intimate Friends, complain not of its Inhumanity. Remember that it puts in Execution the decrees of God's Everlaſting Will, and that it carries with it a Commiſſion ſealed with the Signet of the living God. Adore therefore with all Humility the ſupreme Monarch of Heaven and Earth, and ſay to him as *David*, with a profound Submiſſion, *Lord, I held my tongue, and ſaid nothing, becauſe it was thy doing*, Pſal 39.

I don't wiſh thee to have a Heart of Flint, without natural Affection. Piety and Religion are not barbarous, they deprive us not of our Bowels; the Affection that thou beareſt thy Children is not diſpleaſing to the Father of Mercies, if it be but well govern'd, and don't exceed the natural bounds. 'Tis lawful for thee to be ſenſible of thy Griefs, to weep for their Diſtempers, and to pray for the Recovery of their Health. But when God hath diſpoſed of them, and receiv'd them into his Eternal Reſt, thou muſt ſtop

all thy ſight, wipe all thy Tears, and ſay as *David* did, after the Death of his beloved Child, *We ſhall go to them, but they ſhall not come to us*, 2 Sam. 13.

Do they die of a violent Death? ſtop not thy Conſideration at the evil Blaſts that have carried them away, but lift up thy Mind to the great God that draws theſe Winds out of his Treaſuries; and being armed with a holy conſtancy, ſay with the patient *Job*, *The the Lord gave and the Lord taketh away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.* I am but a weak Inſtrument which God hath employed to put them into the World; but he is their King, their Father, their Creator; he is alſo their Saviour and Redeemer. Now 'tis both juſt and reaſonable that God ſhould diſpoſe of his Subjects, of his Children of his Workmanſhip, and of thoſe whom he hath redeemed with his precious Blood.

The Maſter of a Family gathers at his Pleaſure the Flowers and Fruits of his Garden; ſometimes he cuts off the Buds, ſometimes he ſuffers them to bloſſom, ſometimes he gathers the green Fruit, ſometimes he ſtays till it be ripe; and ſhall not Almighty God have the Liberty to diſpoſe at his Will, of all that grows in his own Territories? The Maſter of the Family hath not created the Trees and Plants that are at his Command, but God hath made and faſhioned with his Almighty Hand, all his Children, and all the Men in the World. Our Flowers wither and ſpoil in a moment, and our Fruits are ſoon rotten, and become unprofitable, notwithſtanding all our Care and Skill to preſerve them; but the Flowers that God cuts or pulls off, he tranſplants in his Heavenly Garden, and gives them a perfect and a Divine Luſtre and Glory, that never fade; and the greeneſt Fruits, that he gathers, he preſerves for all Eternity in unſpeakable Sweetneſs.

Doth this Death draw near to threaten thy Perſon, when it hath diſpatched thy deareſt Friends? Be not frighted at its Appearance, for 'tis not able to anticipate, a moment, the hour appointed by the Wiſ-

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dom of Almighty God. And when that moment ſhall be come, that he ſhall call thee to himſelf from Heaven, offer no Reſiſtance, and ſtop not thy Ears at thy Creator's Voice; ſay with the Prophet *Samuel, ſpeak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth*, 1 Sam. 3. Exod 33. O merciful God, ſince thy glorious Preſence goes before me, I am ready to depart out of this crazy Tabernacle, and to quit this miſerable Wilderneſs, to enter into the Heavenly and Happy *Canaan*; ſay with our Saviour, *Father, the hour is come, glorifie thy Son, that thy Son may glorifie thee*, John 17.

Haſt thou lived many Years upon the Earth? aſcribe not the Cauſe to the Conſtitution of thy Body, to the manner of thy Living, nor to the Skill of thy Phyſicians; but remember that God lengthens thy Days, and come and caſt at his Feet thy reverend gray Hairs, which the Holy Scripture ſtyles, *A Crown of Silver, or a Crown of Glory*, Prov. 16.

Art thou threatned with Death in the Flower of thine Age? Fret not thy ſelf at it, and let not the leaſt word proceed out of thy Mouth, but what is ſeaſoned with the Salt of true Piety. Remember that 'tis God alone cuts off the Thred of thy Life, and puts a Period to thy Mortal Race. Thou haſt as much Reaſon to be grieved, becauſe thou art born ſo late, as to be ſorry that thou dieſt too ſoon. Inſtead of ſpending thy ſelf in uſeleſs Complaints, which is, as if thou that art but an Earthly Veſſel newly formed, ſhouldeſt caſt thy ſelf againſt the Rock of Eternity. Remember to adore and praiſe thy Great Creator, and return him hearty Thanks, in that he is ſo well pleaſed to Crown thee in the middle of thy Race and, ſo bountiful as to beſtow the Salary of the whole Day upon thee, who haſt labour'd but a few hours. He is very favourable to thee to tranſplant thee before thou haſt felt the heat of the Day, and the ſcorching of the Sun. Remember, that 'tis the pleaſant Gale of his Divine Mercy, that drives thee ſo faſt into the ſecure Haven of Eternal Happineſs. Think not therefore that God's

calling thee away in thy Strength, is a Teſtimony of his Diſpleaſure and Hatred; for to haſten and render a Perſon moſt happy, is no ſign of ill will. It may be that God calls thee, becauſe he hath found ſome good thing in thee, as in *Abijah* the Son of *Jeroboam* King of *Iſrael*; becauſe he loves thee dearly, and favours thee, he intends only to remove thee from the approaching Evils, as he did *Joſias*, one of the Holieſt and moſt Religious Princes, that ever Reign'd; becauſe thou doſt walk before him, and ſeekeſt to pleaſe him, he will take thee up into his Holy and Heavenly Paradice, as he did *Enoch*, for fear that the Temptations of the World ſhould alter thy Religious Diſpoſition; and for fear that the Enemy of thy Salvation ſhould prevail upon thee, by his continual and wicked Suggeſtions, to leave the way of Righteouſneſs, in which thou doſt walk at preſent. As there are ſome rich Stuffs, whereof the Aſhes are moſt precious, and others whereof the Cinders are good for nothing but to be caſt away: Thus there are ſome happy gray Heads, where the rich and precious Relicks of Righteouſneſs and Piety ſhine, whereas others are only fit to diſcover the Follies and Vanities of our humane Nature. As there is ſome ſort of Wine that grows better by old Age, and preſerves its ſtrength until it comes to the Dregs; whereas, other Wine there is, that ſoon becomes ſowre and uſeleſs; Likewiſe there are ſome Men, whom old Age makes better and wiſer; ſo that they are like to the *Indian* Trees, that yield precious Perfumes and Frankincenſe, only when they begin to decline and wither. The old Age of ſuch is moſt honourable, and ſends forth a moſt bleſſed perfume of Piety; whereas others corrupt with Age, and give out a moſt filthy Stench; under a white Head they hide a black Soul and a wicked Conſcience. In the decay of their Age, the Vices of the Mind gather Strength, and flouriſh. Inſtead of weeping for the Sins of their Youth, they add Sin to Sin, and are more hardned in Evil. Old Age imprints more Furrows

and

and Wrinkles in their malicious Hearts, than it doth upon their Foreheads. Neither Men nor their Lives are to be meaſured by a Yard or an Ell. We muſt not only conſider how long we have liv'd, but how well we have liv'd, and employ'd the Courſe of this Life. For there are ſome young Men who have the Wiſdom and Prudence of Gray Heads; and there are Gray Heads that become as weak as Infants; and ſome that ſcarce go out of that ſimple Age. The firſt are twice Children, the others continue always in their Childhood; ſome young Men have perform'd ſuch brave and glorious Deeds, that one would judge by the Paſſages of their Lives, that they have liv'd ſeveral Years or Ages. On the contrary, ſome old and decrepit Perſons can ſcarce prove that they have been long in the World, unleſs it be by the Church Regiſter, by their gray Hairs, or by the great number of their wicked and abominable Actions. This Conſideration cauſeth the Author of the Book of *Wiſdom* to ſay, *That old Age is not the moſt reverend, that can ſhew a number of Years, but Wiſdom is to be reckoned old age amongſt men and a life without ſpot*, Chap. 4. 'Tis certian he hath liv'd ſufficiently, who hath learn'd to live well, and hath prepar'd himſelf to die well. To what purpoſe ſhould this miſerable and languiſhing Life be lengthned a few days? Art thou afraid to be happy too ſoon? and feareſt thou to ſee the end of thy Torments? doth the Traveller endeavour to lengthen out a painful and dangerous way? doth the Workman grieve to have finiſh'd betimes his laborious Task? Doth the Soldier murmur becauſe he comes off from his Watch and Guard? Miſerable Man! What are all the Years for which thou doſt ſo impatiently afflict thy ſelf, and vainly deſire? for a Day with God is as a thouſand Years, and a thouſand Years in his ſight, but as one Day.

He that ſails upon the Sea, admires the ſpacious Extent of the Waters and the difference of its rowling Waves that mount up ſometimes to the Clouds, and then fall down again into a bottom. And ſuch as tra-

vel

vel by Land, are delighted to see on one side deep Vallies, and on the other high Mountains, that reach above the Clouds; but if God had but taken us up into the Seat of his Glory, and that we should from that high Heaven cast down our Eye upon this contemptible Globe of the Sea and Land, to behold the proud and stately Mountains, with the most swelling Waves; they would appear unto us but an even plain, or rather they would seem altogether very little. Thus when we compare the Men of the World, the one with the other, we shall find that some have liv'd long and others but a little while: that some are Old, others Young; but in respect of God, there is no difference between the Young and the Old, between an Over-aged *Methusalem*, who lived nine hundred threescore and nine Years, *Gen.* 4. and a Child that hath only seen the Light of the Living; for the Life of all Mankind, is but a Moment in comparison of Eternity.

If thou art ready to die for Righteousness, of a violent Death, meditate seriously upon the Saying of the Prophet *David*, Psal. 116. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the Death of all his Saints.* Arm thy self with an holy Confidence, and say with *Eli*, 1 Sam. 3. *'Tis the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* Imitate the Generosity of St. *Paul*, Acts 20. and grave in thine Heart these Divine Expressions, *The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every City*, saying, *that bonds and afflictions abide in me, but none of these things move me, neither count I my self dear unto my self, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the Ministry which I receiv'd of the Lord Jesus, to testifie the Gospel of the grace of God.* Remember always the Prayer that our Lord and Saviour offered up unto God in the greatest Agony; *Father, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.* Forget not also at this time Christ's Advertisement, *He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this World, shall save it to eternal life*, Joh. 12. O great and glorious Lord God, the

the Enemies of thy Truth are met together againſt thy dear Children whom thou haſt ſanctified by the Blood of the Covenant; but they are not able to do any thing but what thou haſt appointed to be done in thine Eternal Wiſdom.

A Prayer and Meditation upon the Time of Death.

O *Mereiful Lord, who doſt govern all things by thine infinite Wiſdom, and haſt reſerved the Times and the Seaſons in thine own Power; thou haſt not only written my Name in the Book of the Living, but haſt alſo meaſured the length of my Life, and appointed the Hour of my Death. Thou haſt numbred my Days, and preſcribed to me my Bounds, that I cannot paſs beyond them. This miſerable Body is but a weak Tabernacle made up of Earth ſubject to all manner of Infirmities; neverthleſs none is able to deſtroy it without thy Divine Aſſiſtance. The ſame Hand, that hath faſhioned and formed it, muſt break it to pieces. If a Sparrow cannot fall to the Ground without thy Permiſſion, 'tis not poſſible that my Soul ſhould fly away into Heaven without thy Warrant. My God and Father, give me daily Apprehenſions of Death, but let me reſt upon thee, who doſt kill and give Life, who doſt caſt unto the Grave and fetch from thence again. Let Satan and all the Enemies of thy Glory, lay their Snares for me, they are not able to do any thing, but what thy Wiſdom hath ordained and appointed before the Foundation of the World; without thy Leave and Permiſſion, they are not able to pluck an Hair from my Head, nor diminiſh a moment from the Time that I am to live in this Earthly Tabernacle. O Almighty and moſt merciful God, I recommend to thee my Soul, as to my faithful Creator, and yield it wholly into thine Hands. Here I am to accompliſh thy Will, and to ſubmit my ſelf*

to thy Pleasure, without any Resistance; whether this Soul, which thou hast created after thy Likeness, and which is an Image of thy Divinity, remain in this Body, that I may be able to serve thee on Earth, or whether thou dost call for it, and take it up into Heaven, that it may glorifie thee in the Company of thy Saints, and of thy blessed and glorious Angels. Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation upon the Manner of our Death.

O *God, the Creator of all Flesh, and the Father of the immortal Spirits, I know that every kind of Death of thy Children is precious in thy sight; and that howsoever that shall happen, thou wilt take care of my Soul. When I consider all things, I find that it matters not whether my Spirit issues out of my Lips, or out of a Wound, so that it enter into thy Glory, to enjoy thine Eternal Happiness. What matter is it if my Lamp goes out of its own accord, or if it be blown out by some envious Blast, so that it be lighted again by the immortal Beams of the Son of Righteousness, and continue for ever Glorious in the highest Heavens. I shall be sufficiently happy if I die in the Lord and enter into thine Eternal Rest, from all my Labours, in what manner soever Death assaults me. From all Eternity, O Lord, thou knowest all thy Works, and with a glance of thine Eye, thou discoverest the depths, and seest into an endless Eternity. As thou hast marked out and appointed the moment of my Death, thou hast also ordained the manner of it. I must, O Almighty God, repose my self upon this wonderful and wise Providence, and be contented with thy uncontroulable Decrees. But O my God, and Heavenly Father, if thou wilt give me the Liberty, who am but Dust and Ashes, to speak to thee, and to send up the Thoughts of my Heart; I beseech thee to be so gracious, as to let me know my end, that I may not be surprized on a sudden by an unexpected Death, as* Job's *Children; and so merciful*

as

as to give me timely notice of my Departure, as thou didſt to thy Servant Hezekiah. *I deſire not the notice of many Years, but of a few Days, or at leaſt of a few Hours immediately before, that my Soul may not be diſturbed with evil Thoughts, or frighted with falſe Conceits, and malicious Suggeſtions of the Devil; but that I may end my Days with all Tranquillity and Satisfaction of Mind, that I may always have a perfect uſe of my Senſes, of my Reaſon and Underſtanding, and the aſſiſtance af thy Grace, that I may glorifie thy Name, and edifie my Neighbours, until the laſt moment of my Departure. Suffer not therefore my Soul to be ſnatched away by force on a ſudden, but grant me time to commit it into thy merciful Hands.* Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for One that dies in a ſtrange Country, in the midſt of Infidels.

O *My God and Heavenly Father, how grievous is this Trial? who can expreſs the troubles of my Mind? at the moment of my moſt urgent Neceſſity, and of the Oppreſſion of my Soul, at the time of my Agony, I ſee my ſelf deſtitute of all humane Aſſiſtance. Here I am at a diſtance not only from my Country, and pleaſant Company of my Friends, and deprived of all Spiritual Comfort, of which I have at preſent greateſt need in this Extremity; but alſo, to my unſpeakable Grief, here I am in a ſtrange Place, in the Power of my cruel Enemies. I have no Body to ſtrengthen me in the Faith of my Saviour Chriſt. All things that appear before me, increaſe and add to my Trouble; I am here among the Adverſaries of thy Truth, who labour to deſtroy my Intereſt in Chriſt, and cauſe me to periſh, now that I am entring into the Haven of Eternity. I muſt encounter with Death, with Hell it ſelf, and with the ſubtil Inſinuations of the Infernal Spirits. O Almighty and merciful Lord, ſuffer me not to loſe my Courage, and to yield to the preſent Temptation. By thy wonderful Providence,*

and

and out of thine abundant Mercy ſupply all my Wants and Infirmities, and grant that I may with the Shield of Faith, quench all the fiery Darts of Satan. I am beſet with many viſible and inviſible Enemies; but they that are for me, are more in number than they that are againſt me. 'Tis true, I am far from Heaven, whereof the Earth is the Centre. I am at a diſtance from all my Earthly Friends, but nothing can put me at a diſtance from thee, O good God, who loveſt me with an unchangeable Affection. I am in the Embraces of mine Heavenly Father, and of my God, I have not the Aſſiſtance of a Miniſter, to help me in my Grief and Pain, but I know that thou will ſend me thine holy Angels, as once to thy beloved Son in his bitter Agony. Theſe Angels ſhall protect me againſt all the Powers of the Prince of Darkneſs; thou wilt adminiſter unto me thy ſelf, the ſweet Comforts of thy Salvation; thy Rod and thy Staff will aſſiſt me in this Valley and Shadow of Death. O Lord, thou doſt things that are not to be ſearched out, and ſo many Wonders, that 'tis not poſſible to number them, thy Grace is ſufficient for me, and thy Power is made manifeſt in mine Infirmities. Thine Holy Spirit, who is the true Comforter, and the great Power of the Almighty ſhall refreſh me in theſe my Afflictions, and in all things ſhall make me more than Conqueror. Thou art ſtronger than all other Beings, ſo that I am perſuaded, nothing can raviſh me out of thine Hands. I am certain, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other Creature can ſeparate me from the Love that thou haſt declared to me in Jeſus Chriſt my Lord; this precious Faith with which thou haſt ſtrengthened my Soul, ſhall vanquiſh the World, triumph over Hell, and deſtroy Death in its own Empire. Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation on the Death of a Beloved Perſon.

O *My God, I acknowledge that there is nothing certain nor unchangeable on Earth, but thy precious and holy Promiſes; therefore it becomes us to enjoy the things of the World, as not to enjoy them. Thou haſt ſnatched out of my Embraces, and pulled from my Boſom my greateſt Darling, and moſt intimate Friend. Thou haſt open'd my Heart, and torn my Bowels, and thou haſt ſeparated me from my ſelf, ſo that my Life it but a Burden and Pain to me. I did often look upon this pleaſant Object of my Love, as a Gift from above, and a mark of thy Favour and Liberality; it was my greateſt Joy and my ſweeteſt Comfort. The day that took it away, overwhelm'd me in a Sea of Grief. That which doth moſt diſturb me, is, that I am afraid, that this is a ſtroak and an effect of thy Anger and Juſtice. Lord my God, I muſt needs acknowledge, that I have grievouſly offended thee, ſeeing thou doſt thus chaſtiſe me with ſo much Severity, and makeſt me to feel ſo ſharp an affliction. I am unworthy of all thy Favours, ſeeing thou doſt take from me ſuch a precious Jewel which was ſhew'd to me as Lightning. I am afraid to have been wanting in my Duty, and that this Death that kills me, is the effect of my Stupidity and Blindneſs. Methinks I could have hindred this doleful Accident; for if I had behaved my ſelf otherwiſe than I have done, my Life and Soul ſhould not be in its Grave. O God of all Comfort, pardon my exceſſive Grief, pacifie my Sighs, ſtop the current of my Tears, remove all theſe vain Diſpleaſures that conſume me, deliver my Soul from this unmerciful Grief and Torment, that it ſuffers, and from theſe Troubles that are more than humane, inſtead of looking to thoſe inferior Cauſes, and to the Circumſtances of the Death of this beloved Perſon; give me Grace to remember that the leaſt things, as well as the greateſt, are govern'd and rul'd by thy Wiſe Providence, and*

that

that the good and the evil proceed from thy Divine Appointment. Give me Grace to consider, that thou dost hold in thine Almighty Hand, the Keys of Life and Death, and that thou alone dost cast us into the Grave, and lift us up from thence again. Thou, O Sovereign Monarch of the Universal World, who dost not only let Death loose, but also appointest all the Circumstances; make me truly submissive unto thy Sacred Pleasure, and to put the Finger upon my Lips, because 'tis thy doing. If I open them, let it be to adore thy Justice, and sing forth thy Praises. The Person for whom I lament so much, was nearly related to me, like another my self, and was also thy Creature, thy Child, and a Member of our Saviour's Mystical Body. We for our parts believe to have the right of disposing of our Workmanship, and of that which we have bought with our Money; and hast not thou, O God, the Liberty to dispose of that which thou hast created after thy Likeness? Bought, not with corruptible things, as with Gold and Silver, but with the precious Blood of the Lamb, without Spot or Blemish. Thou hast a Son who is the Brightness of thy Glory, and the express Image of thy Person, whom thou hast not spared for me; and shall I, Lord, refuse thee my Heart and my Bowels? Thy only begotten Son came down upon Earth to suffer the most cruel and ignominious Death of the Cross, but thou hast taken up into Heaven the Person whom my Soul loved, to crown him with a glorious and ever happy Immortality. Shall his or her Fedility be the cause of my Afflictions? And shall his or her Rest occasion my Displeasure? 'Tis the property of true Love to prefer the Happiness of the Beloved Person to our Satisfaction: Therefore our Saviour told his Apostles, if you did love me, you would rejoyce, because I go to my Father, for my Father is greater than I. Between thee, O great and living God, and us miserable Worms of the Earth, there is a vast Difference, as there is between the innocent and harmless Delights of this World, and the unspeakable Pleasures of thy Presence. For these are but as drops of Water, that are dried up with the least Wind, whereas the Satisfactions of Heaven are like a bottomless Sea of Delights, in which we shall swim for ever. Do I therefore weep for him or for her, whose tears thou hast

wip'd

wip'd away? Do I wear a mourning Apparrel, and black Scarf, for him who is now cover'd with a Glorious Attire of Joy and Gladneſs, who is adorn'd with an Habit as white as Snow? Do I delight my ſelf in Darkneſs, and doth he ſolace himſelf at the Fountain of Light and Glory? Do I ſeek a ſolitary and melancholy Retreat, and doth he rejoice amongſt the thouſands of Angels, and the Glorious Company of immortal Spirits? I Sigh and Groan, and he ſings a new Song, the Song of the Bleſſed, which is always in his Mouth. All my Complaints and Groanings cannot bring him back upon Earth; but if that were poſſible, 'tis not juſt to attempt it, my Kindneſs would be cruel, and my Love muſt be inhumane. How could I reſolve to make him leave the Haven of eternal Felicity, to expoſe him again to the furious Waves and Storms of this troubleſome Sea of the World? to engage him in freſh Encounters, to cloath him with the Rags of Mortality, to take him out of Rivers of Pleaſures, and bring him back again into a Sea of Gall and Bitterneſs, and feed him again with the Bread of Affliction. Can I be ſo cruel as to wiſh him out of thy Embraces, and the raviſhing Enjoyment of thy Favour, and eternal Life, to deliver him again into the Torments of Mortality. The ſhortneſs of this Life minds me of my departure after him, to the Light of the Living, where we may again enjoy one another. O Lord, truly wonderful, and various in all thy Diſpenſations! 'Tis not only for the Advantage of this happy Creature, and thy Glory, that thou haſt taken him into thy Reſt; but for my good, and the Inſtruction of his ſurviving Friends; to put my Obedience and Faith to a Trial, as thou didſt the Father of the Faithful, whoſe Trial was far greater than mine. For thou commandedſt him to Sacrifice his Son with his own Hands: but thou requireſt from me no other Sacrifice but my ſubmiſſion to thy Holy Will. I will therefore ſpeak in Heli's *Language, 'tis the Lord, let him do as ſeemeth him good; Or as* Job, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord. Thou haſt taken from me what I highly valu'd on Earth, that I might look up to Heaven whither he is departed before me. Grant me therefore Grace to put an end to all theſe Sighs, Groans and*

Tears, and spend no longer my Time and Breath lamenting the loss of my beloved Object; but that I may employ my self to prepare for my Removal out of this Earthly Tabernacle. Grant that I may imitate the Piety, Zeal, Faith, and Constancy, and all other Virtues of such as thou hast admitted into thine eternal Rest, and crown'd with everlasting Joy and Happiness. Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his. Amen.

CHAP. X.

The fourth Remedy against Fears of Death, is to disingage our Hearts from the World.

THE Children of *Israel* decamp'd from the Wilderness witth a ready mind, andwent joyfully over the River *Jordan*, when God commanded them so to do. The Cause of this their Readiness, was an earnest longing for the Land of *Canaan*, and their unsettled Condition in the Wilderness, having nothing but Tents to live in. Death is to us the same, in regard of our Heavenly Paradise, as the River *Jordan* was to the Children of *Israel*, in respect of the promised Land. Therefore from hence it appears, that the strongest Motives to oblige us to a Resolution of entring into this Passage willingly, is to free our selves from all things which might incumber, stop, or tye us to the World, and keep our selves always in a Readiness to depart.

For that purpose 'tis not necessary that we should go out of the World, but that the World should be banished, and driven out of us, and that we should renounce all Vanities and unruly Affections, so that we might be able to speak with the Apostle, *The World is Crucified in Me, and I am Crucified to the World.* For there be many who depart out of the World, but leave their Hearts and most tender Affections behind. As

Lot's

Lot's Wife that went out of *Sodom*, but left there her Treaſures and Delights, her moſt ardent deſires. As the *Iſraelites*, who when they went out of *Egypt*, left behind them their curſed Affections, with their Pots of Fleſh and Onions.

The ſame thing happens to many, who ſeparate themſelves without any Neceſſity, from the acquaintance of Mankind, and who affect a ſtrange and auſtere kind of Life. They leave the Society of Wiſe and Vertuous Perſons, and the lawful uſe of the Bleſſings which Heaven had granted them; and they deprive themſelves of all that deſerve Eſteem, and the means of glorifying God, and edifying their Neighbours. But many times they carry with them their Corruptions, their Vices, and a Legion of wicked Thoughts and carnal Deſires. By this means they give way to the Devil, and expoſe themſelves to all his Temptations. For that wicked Serpent delights rather in the Dens of wild Beaſts, and in the Caves of the Earth, than in the Palaces and Dwellings of Princes and Kings. The moſt abominable Vices creep and breed rather in the Deſarts, and places of Retreat, than in Publick, and in the great Cities that are full of Inhabitants. *Lot* remain'd Chaſte in the moſt abominable City that was in the World; but when he went aſide to the Foot of a Mountain, and into the Cave to dwell, he defiled himſelf with a Monſtrous Inceſt. When Satan intended to tempt our Saviour Chriſt, he carried him into a Deſart, and to the top of a Mountain. From hence we may learn, that this ſubtile Enemy of Mankind hath learnt by his long Experience, that the Places of Retreat, and the moſt Solitary, are the fitteſt to lay his Snares. If our Saviour who was wholly Innocent, and free from Sin, hath been able overcome all manner of Temptations; we are not of the ſame Temper, we are not furniſh'd with ſuch Armour as he was, of Proof againſt all the enflamed Darts of the Devil. For our miſerable Fleſh delights in its owe Deſtruction, it opens the Ears and the Heart wide, to

the deceitful Promiſes of Satan, and ſuffers it ſelf to be cheated by his damnable Enchantments. It flatters us, and cauſeth us to be lull'd aſleep in its Boſom, then like a treacherous *Dalilah*, it betrays us into the unmerciful Hands of our great Enemy.

Some cloath themſelves with Hair, and wear at their Girdle a knotted Cord, whom the Devil drags to Hell with the inviſible Chains of Luſt. Others climb up to the top of frozen Mountains, and yet their Hearts burn with impure Flames. Some affect a mournful Solitarineſs, whoſe Deſires and Longings are for the World and its Vanities. Others have their Hands lifted up to Heaven, whoſe Mind is enſlaved to the Earth, and rooted in the rotten and filthy Pleaſures of the Age. Some have a Lamp burning before them, whoſe Underſtanding is wrapt in groſs Darkneſs, more palpable than that of *Egypt*. Others have an empty Stomach, whoſe Soul is full of abominable Paſſions. In ſhort, ſome live in appearace like Angels, and yet they are poſſeſſed by Legions of Infernal Spirits. Others ſeem to have a Concernment in the World, and yet lodge the whole World in their Hearts.

Under a courſe Habit dwells oft times more Envy, more Vanity and Ambition, than under the glorious Attire of Silk and Gold. Thro' a torn Habit ſome Souls may be perceived ſwelled with Pride and Arrogancy: and in Company of Beggars, are to be found many times the Deſigns of Kings, and the lofty Thoughts of the greateſt Monarchs. To ſpeak plainly, The good things and advantages of this Life don't ſtop and wed us of themſelves, to this World; but rather that Love and Affection which we bear to them. For without doubt, there be many that are more earneſt and affectionate for the Things they want, than others that enjoy them. Some poor People have a far greater longing for Riches, than ever *Solomon* had in the midſt of all his great Treaſures. Some ſilly Women that are covered with old Rags, and ſome contemptible

temptible *Joans* have more Vanity and Pride in their Brains, than ever had Queen *Eſther* in her richeſt and moſt glorious Attire. The Prophet *Daniel* was raiſed to an high and eminent Honour, for he was the Governor of the third part of the Monarchy of the *Perſians*, and of the *Medes*; nevertheleſs, he was no more concerned in *Babylon*, than if he had had there but a Sepulchre, and worn the Chains of a Slave; he ſends forth as many Sighs, and pours as many Tears as if he had been ſitting upon the Aſhes of *Jeruſalem*.

Some pitiful Beggars are more loath to quit their Rags, than the Sovereign Princes to lay down the Enſigns of their Dignity and Honour. Such are more enſlav'd to their Filth and Baſeneſs, than the greateſt Monarchs to the Glory and Splendor of their Empire. Death labours as much to free a Man from his Priſon, and to take him out of his Dungeon, as to drive him out of his Palace, and to tumble him from his Throne; the Poor and the Indigent, who have no other Bed to lie upon than the hard Ground, make as much reſiſtance as the Rich, who are ſtretched upon the ſofteſt Couches: The Gally-ſlaves are as unwilling that Death ſhould looſe them from their Chains, and take them out of their Miſery, as the Kings and Prïnces are to leave their Sceptres and their Crowns. I am fully perſwaded, that *David* was more willing to go from his Command, and from his Riches, than many Poor Wretches are to depart from their dunghils, and their meanneſs. Some Perſons are tormented with the Gout, the Stone, and other grievous and ſenſible Pains; they deſire nevertheleſs, more paſſionately to live than many that enjoy a perfect and flouriſhing Health. Carnal and Earthly Souls, are ſo much wedded to the Earth that they feel a great Reluctancy, and an unſpeakable Diſpleaſure, when they are to depart from a Body rotten and falling to pieces with old Age. Whereas others that are more Spiritualiz'd, and that have taſted of the Heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come, depart moſt willingly out of

young and luſty Bodies, flouriſhing in their Strength and Beauty.

We muſt not therefore remove out of the World our Legs and Arms, but our Affections and vain Luſts. If God beſtows upon us his Earthly Bleſſings, we are not to follow the Example of that extravagant Philoſopher, who caſt into the Sea his Silver and his precious Stones that he might not have the Trouble to keep them; and who loſt them willingly, that he might not be in any further danger of loſing them afterwards. But we muſt take heed, that they cauſe not our Faith to make Shipwrack, and that we regard them not more than our Conſciences. For the Soul is a far more precious Jewel than the Body, and Life is far more conſiderable than Cloathing. Seeing that God beſtows upon us ſo many good things with an intent that we ſhould enjoy them; we ſhould ſhew our ſelves unthankful to his Goodneſs, contrary to his wiſe Providence, and unjuſt and cruel to our ſelves, to refuſe the means of ever uſing and employing theſe Bleſſings. All God's Creatures are good, and none are to be rejected, if we accept of them with Thankſgiving; for they are ſanctified by the Word of God, and by Prayer.

The Honour and Riches derived to us from our Birth, or that we obtain by lawful and juſt means, are to be ranked among the Bleſſings of God. Therefore *Eſther*, who was but a poor Stranger, receiv'd with Joy, as a Favour from Heaven, the Imperial Crown that was put upon her Head, and refuſed not to be the Wife of the greateſt Monarch of that time. *Joſeph* accepted willingly the Power and Dignity with which King *Pharaoh* had inveſted him; and the Prophet *Daniel* did not only take the honourable Commands which were beſtowed upon him by the King of *Babylon*, but he employ'd his Power and Credit to raiſe alſo his Companions to the Places of Truſt, and to the Government of that Empire. God ſometimes gives Sceptres into the Hands of Cruel and prophane Perſons, ſuch as were *Pharaoh*, *Ahab*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belſhazzar*, and

and *Herod*, to teach us, that 'tis not the chief good of Man, and that we muſt aim at a more excellent Kingdom, and at more ſolid and conſtant Felicities. He alſo places upon the Throne Men according to his own Heart, whom he cheriſheth as the Apple of his Eye, as *David*, *Solomon*, *Jehoſaphat*, *Hezekiah*, and *Joſias*, to teach us that the Fear of God, and the Expectation of an Immortal Crown, is not inconſiſtent with the Honours of this Life, nor with worldly Glory; *For true Piety hath the Promiſes of this Life, and of that which is to come.*

The Riches of the Earth are no more hurtful than the Honours and Dignities, unleſs it be by accident; they are very uſeful and advantageous to ſuch as employ them well and diſpoſe of them with Religious Diſcretion. They are powerful helps to true Piety, and excellent means to glorifie God, and to exerciſe our Mercy and Compaſſion. I may ſay that they give a Luſtre to the Zeal and Charity of God's Children. Riches turn to Evils, and are ill beſtowed in the hand of a Brute and ſordid *Nabal*; at the diſpoſition of a mercileſs and vuluptuous Glutton of the Goſpel, of a perfidious and treacherous *Judas*, of a ſilly and debauched Youth, as the prodigal Son; but they are the Bleſſings of Heaven, when they fall into the hand of a *Joſeph*, who nouriſheth therewith his Father, and all his Kindred; in the Hands of a *David* that employ'd them in Offerings to Almighty God in the ſight of his People; of a *Solomon*, who built a magnificent Temple; and of a *Mary Magdalen*, who ſpent them not in Luxury and Vanity, nor in curious Trinkets, but to buy a Box full of precious Ointment, which ſhe poured on the Head of the Saviour of the World. Theſe are Bleſſings indeed, when ſuch an one enjoys them, as *Cornelius* the *Centurion*, who employed them in Alms, whereof the Perfume aſcended up to the Throne of the God of Mercies. In ſhort, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the eternal Wiſdom of his Father, hath uttered out of his ſacred Mouth, that *It was more Bleſſed to give than to receive*, Acts 20.

I am not ignorant of the Oracle pronounced by this great God and Saviour, *That whoſoever doth not renounce Father, Mother, Houſes and Lands for my ſake is not worthy of me*, Matt. 10. This was ſaid to teach us, that we muſt renounce with Heart and Affection all things in the World, and of this preſent Life, and that we muſt be always ready to forſake all, in caſe we cannot keep them without offending God, and giving a ſcandal to his Church. But without ſuch abſolute neceſſity, God requires not from us in any place of Scripture, actully to quit and leave our Worldly Poſſeſſions.

I know alſo very well, that when a young Man enquired from our Saviour, *What he was to do to inherit Eternal Life*, Luke 18. This wiſe Teacher returned him this Anſwer, *Sell all that thou haſt, and give it to the poor, and thou ſhalt have Riches in Heaven; then come and follow me*, Luke 18. This was a particular Commandment made only to that Man, upon a ſingular occaſion; from whence it is not poſſible that we ſhould gather any Concluſion to oblige others to the ſame Action. For otherwiſe this might oblige all Chriſtians in general to ſell what they have, without exception, and to give it to the poor. The Commandment was given upon this occaſion; this vain glorious Phariſee boaſted of having kept all the Commandments of God from his Youth up. To remove this good Opinion of himſelf out of his Mind, and to give a vent to the ſwelling of his Phariſaical Pride, our Lord puts him to a Tryal, enjoins him to ſell all his Goods, and to give them to the Poor. At theſe words the young Man went away very ſad, in a Confuſion, becauſe he had much Riches and his ſtrongeſt Affections were fixed there. By this he diſcover'd, that he was far from loving God with all his Heart and with all his Soul, and with all his Strength, becauſe it appeared that he loved his Worldly Poſſeſſions more than Chriſt and his Bleſſedneſs. You may therefore underſtand without Difficulty, devout Souls, that this Commandment made to this Young Man, extends not to

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all in general If it had been ſo underſtood, the holy Apoſtles who were mindful of every thing that tended to Perfection, would not have reſted ſatisfied with the loſs of their Goods, to follow Chriſt, as they declar'd to him themſelves, *We have left all, and have followed thee*, Matth. 19. But they would have reſerv'd nothing for themſelves, which courſe they never took. For St. *John*, Chriſt's beloved Diſciple, had a dwelling Houſe, where he entertained the Holy Virgin, after our Saviour's Death, *John* 19. And the other Apoſtles had their Ships, their Nets and Tackling; therefore after Chriſt's Reſurrection, they returned to their Fiſhing Trade.

Our Saviour, upon this Occaſion of the Young Man's refuſing to obey this expreſs and particular Command *of ſelling his goods, and giving them to the poor*, informs his Diſciples, *That it is hard for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* But he explains in another place this paſſage in ſuch a manner, that he leaves not the leaſt difficulty in it: When he ſaith, That 'tis hard for them, who put their confidence in Riches, to enter into the Kingdom of God, *Matt.* 19. By this we may underſtand, that he ſpeaks not of all rich Men in general, but of ſuch only who put their Truſt in their Riches. Therefore the Apoſtle St. *Paul* don't command the Rich Men to caſt away their Eſtates and Goods; but he adviſes them not to put their Confidence in them, ſo as to become more vain and haughty. In this manner he ſpeaks to *Timothy*, *Charge them that are Rich in this World, that they be not high minded, nor truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*, 1 Tim. 6.

Here are therefore the beſt Directions, according to my Judgment, for a true Chriſtian, who deſires his Soul to be acceptable to God, to attain to the diſpoſitions neceſſary for an happy Death.

Firſt, we muſt employ our moſt conſtant and earneſt Endeavours and Affections, for the carnal Advantages of the Soul, and of the Life to come. We muſt

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thirſt impatiently for the Graces of God, and for the Gifts of his Holy Spirit. We muſt ſigh and long for the Spiritual Riches of the Soul, and labour with all our ſtrength to attain to the uncorruptible Crown, and the immortal Glory of Heaven. Chriſt gives us in this Holy and Safe Advice. *Seek*, ſaith he, *firſt the Kingdom of God and its Righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you*, Mat. 6. And elſewhere, *Labour not for the meat which periſheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlaſting Life*, John 6.

2. As the good King *Solomon* built firſt the Lord's Houſe, and then laid the Foundation of his own Palace: Thus we ought to proceed to labour firſt for the Advancement of God's Kingdom, and the Edification of his Church, that then we may have liberty to employ our ſelves about the Affairs of this preſent Life, and about our worldly Concerns. But our Employment and Calling muſt be juſt, and warranted by the Laws of God and Man; for he that gains Riches by unlawful Arts, is but a Thief and a Robber.

3. Before we engage in any Work we muſt pray to God, to vouchſafe his Bleſſing to it, and ſpeak to him as *Moſes*, *Let the Beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and eſtabliſh thou the Work of our Hands upon us, yea the Work of our Hand, eſtabliſh thou it*, Pſal. 90. For without his Aſſiſtance and Bleſſing, all our Labours will be in vain and to little purpoſe. 'Tis God that makes Poor and makes Rich, that lifts up and abaſeth, 1 *Jam.* 2. *Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereh, but God that giveth the encreaſe*, 1 Cor. 3. The Royal Prophet is of the ſame Judgment, when he ſaith, If the Lord builded not the City, their Labour is but loſt that build it.

4. Our Labour muſt be without Murmurings, and miſtruſting God's Providence, we muſt baniſh out of our Minds, all idle Thoughts and groundleſs Expectations that diſturb us, *Pſal.* 107. We muſt pluck out of our Hearts all the Cares and Diſpleaſures that trouble us. We muſt imprint in our Minds that excel-

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lent Sentencce of *David*, *Caſt thy burden upon the Lord, and he ſhall ſuſtain thee*, Pſal. 5. And that of St. *Peter*, *Caſt all your care upon him, for he careth for you*, 1 Pet. 5. We muſt remember our Saviour's Charge, *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time your Hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, and the cares of this Life*, Luke 21.

5. Above all things we muſt beware of the ſlaviſh Vice of Covetouſneſs, that denies God's good Providence and his Fatherly Care. To that purpoſe St. *Paul* exhorts us in expreſs Words, *Let your Converſation be without Covetouſneſs, and be content with ſuch things as ye have; for he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee*, Heb. 13. That he might beget in us an averſion of this infamous Vice, St. *Paul* tells us, *They that will be Rich fall into temptation and a ſnare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown Men in deſtruction and perdition*, 1 Tim. 6. He adds next, *For the Love of Mony, is the root of all evil, which while ſome coveted after, they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themſelves through with many ſorrows*, Col. 3. The ſame Apoſtle declares, That Covetouſneſs is Idolatry, and that it ſhall never inherit the Kingdom of God, *Eph.* 5. Therefore we ought to follow the wiſe King's Advice, *Labour not to be Rich, but forbear from any ſuch deſign*, Prov. 25.

6. If God is pleaſed to afflict us with Poverty, and to caſt us down in the Duſt of a mean Eſtate, notwithſtanding our continual Labours in a lawful Calling; let us endeavour to poſſeſs our Souls with patience. Look upon Chriſt our Saviour, who for our ſakes became Poor, altho' he was Rich, that we might be enriched by his Poverty. Let us beſeech him to grant us the Bleſſed Diſpoſition of St. *Paul*, that we may be able to ſpeak as he did, *I have learn'd to be content in whatſoever eſtate I am. I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound every where and in all things; I am inſtructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and ſuffer need. I can do all things through Chriſt, which ſtrengtheneth me*, Phil. 4. Remember, Chriſtian Souls, to ſettle your

your Treaſure in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Ruſt can corrupt and where Thieves cannot break thro' and ſteal; labour to be rich in Faith, and in good Works, that you may inherit the Kingdom that God hath promiſed to them that love him.

7. But if it hath pleaſed God to bleſs thy Labours, and his powerful and liberal Hand hath raiſed thee up to great Honour, ſo that thou enjoyeſt Riches in abundance, thou muſt remember to poſſeſs them in ſuch a manner that they may not enſlave thee. And according to St. *Paul*'s Advice, thou muſt remember to enjoy them, as if thou enjoyeſt them not, and that the faſhion of this World paſſeth away. We muſt not truſt upon them, nor pride in them. We ought to glory in ſomething elſe, as God himſelf exhorts us, let not the Wiſe Man boaſt of his Wiſdom, nor the ſtrong of his Strength; let not the Rich Man glory in his Riches; but he that glories, let him glory in that he hath Underſtanding, and knows me, *Jer.* 9.

8. We muſt not only take off our Hearts and Affections from the World and its Vanities, trample upon them and eſteem them like Dung, in compariſon of the unſpeakable Treaſures of Heaven; but we muſt alſo be ready to leave them at every moment, as ſo many trifles, vain and periſhable things. As we are to poſſeſs them without Diſpleaſure and Fear, ſo we muſt part with them without Grief and Murmuring. When we ſhould loſe in a Day all that God hath beſtow'd upon us in the World, it becomes us to ſtrengthen our ſelves with an holy Confidence, and Reſolution, ſaying with *Job, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord*, Job 1.

9. If we happen to part with our Goods, Honours, and Dignities in the Service of God, and for the Profeſſion of Chriſt's Goſpel; in ſuch a caſe, we ought to endure the loſs with a Chriſtian Patience, and an exceſſive Joy, becauſe that ſuch a loſs for a juſt Cauſe will prove at laſt to our Advantage and Glory. This was the Practice of the faithful *Hebrews*, of whom St. *Paul* renders

renders this Teſtimony, *You have received with Joy the ſpoiling of your Goods, knowing that you have in Heaven a better and more laſting inheritance*, Heb. 10. Chriſtian Souls, repreſent unto your ſelves the Example of the Prophet *Moſes*, who *eſteem'd the Reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of Egypt, for he had a reſpect unto the recompence of the reward*, Heb. 11.

11. Whilſt we enjoy our Goods, we muſt take care of the Poor, and be bountiful in Alms; and to ſpeak in St. *Paul's* Language, *Whilſt we have any time, let us do Good, eſpecially to the Houſhold of Faith*, Gal. 6. Whoever hath Compaſſion of the Poor, makes God his Debtor; he will aſſuredly return him his good Deed, *Prov.* 9. Our Saviour promiſeth to recompenſe a Cup of cold Water, that ſhall be given to the meaneſt of ſuch as believe in his Name *Matt.* 10. Alms is a Seed that is caſt upon the Earth, but its Flowers, and moſt excellent Fruits are to be gather'd in Heaven. He that ſows liberally ſhall reap liberally. 'Tis not therefore as that other Seed mentioned, *Pſ.* 126. That they that ſow in Tears, ſhall reap with Songs of Triumph, 2 *Cor.* 9. For whoſoever beſtows his Alms ſparingly, and unwillingly, he ſhall be treated in the ſame manner as him that refuſeth to part with it. Therefore St. *Paul* declares, *When I ſhould give all my Goods to nouriſh the poor, if I have no Charity I am nothing*, 2 Cor. 13. God loves a chearful Giver, and delights in ſuch Sacrifices, 2 *Cor.* 9. Remember therefore Chriſtian, that God ſhall judge you at the laſt Day, not by Learning, Knowledge, Riches or Dignities, and Honours of this Life, but by your Alms deeds and Acts of Charity and Hoſpitality, and by diſtributing of your Goods to the Neceſſities of the Saints. Make to your ſelves Friends of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when you fail they may receive you into everlaſting Habitations, *Matt.* 25. *Rom.* 12. *Luke* 16. That upon your Tomb, one may juſtly engrave, *He hath ſcattered, he hath given to the Poor, his Righteouſneſs*, that is, his Charity and Alms-deeds *remain for ever*, Pſal. 111.

11. Finally,

11. Finally, We must not only take off our Hearts and Affections from the Riches, Honours and Vanities of this World, but we must also deny our selves, tame and overcome our Passions, and Crucify our Flesh with its Lusts. Therefore our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ calls upon us from Heaven, *He that will follow me, let him deny himself, take up his Cross daily, and come after me*, Mat. 10.

That we may be able to imprint this good Lesson in our Minds, we should seriously consider in the first place, that we are but Strangers and Pilgrims in this World, and that we have no lasting City, *Heb.* 13. The Houses that God grants to us, are no perpetual Dwellings, but only Inns for our present Conveniency. This was the frequent Consideration of the great Patriarch, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, who saw the Promises afar off, and believed and imbraced them. For St. *Paul* informs us, they did ingenuously profess, that they were no better than Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, and their intention was to march forwards to their Celestial Country. This was *Jacob*'s Language when he appeared before *Pharaoh*: *The Days of my Pilgrimage have been short and evil, they have not attained to the Years of the Life of my Fathers, and of the Time of their Pilgrimage*, Heb. 12. Gen. 47. And not only the ancient Patriarchs, who never had any other Possessions in the World, than a Tomb, or some small Piece of Ground, have acknowledg'd themselves to be Strangers and Pilgrims, but Princes and Kings also whom God hath sanctified, by his Holy Spirit, have freely confess'd the same. For *David* declares not in the time of his Banishment, not of his Flight, nor in his Calamities and Misery, but in his most flourishing State, and in the midst of his Triumphs, Glory, and Plenty, and Prosperity he declares unto God, *I am a stranger and sojourner with thee, as all my Fathers were*, Psal. 39 and 119. And when he speaks not only of himself, but also of the rest of God's Children that are upon Earth, he makes no difficulty to confess, *We are strangers and sojourners with thee, as*

all our Fathers were, and our Days are as a Shadow upon Earth, that have no ſtop, 1 Chron. 29. Rich and Poors, Maſters and Servants, Princes and Subjects, all of us in general, we may with Reaſon ſay to the Men of this World as *Abraham* to the Children of *Heth*, *I am a ſtranger and a ſojourner in the midſt of you*. Now he that travels in a ſtrange Country, may gather ſome Flowers in his Paſſage, or take with him a few Ears of Corn; but if he be wiſe, he will never tarry to build a Palace. If he be well treated in his Inn he muſt not deſpiſe the good Chear; but if his Entertainment be bad he muſt endure with Patience the Inconveniencies, and contemn all the Diſorders that happen during his Abode. If the Way be deep, full of Mud, Bryers, and Thorns, he muſt go out of them as ſoon as he can. And if it be good and pleaſant, he muſt not ſtop in it; not to buſie himſelf with needleſs Inqiuries. Every one that is a Traveller dreams of nothing but how to advance in his Journey, and go forward. Likewiſe, being accuſtomed to Plenty and Want, to Riches and Poverty, to Honour and Diſhonour, we ought to leave the things that are behind, and to proceed forward to ſuch as are before, that we may attain to the End and Reward of our Heavenly Calling, *Phil.* 3.

2. Conſider not only, I beeſech you, that we are Strangers and Sojourners in the Word, and that we are not to inhabit always in this Foreign Country, but that our Paſſage will be but for a few Days, *Rev.*7. We need but little to flouriſh and entertain us in this ſhort Race; at the end of it we ſhall neither hunger nor thirſt, and the Sun ſhall burn us no more. As it happen'd with *Jacob* and his Family, when they went into *Egypt*, they had no other Corn nor Food, but what was needful and neceſſary for them in the way; becauſe they were certain to meet with plenty of all manner of good things in *Joſeph*'s Houſe. Likewiſe we need not make any great Proviſion for our ſelves in this Life, becauſe we are marching apace towards our Saviour Chriſt, our elder Brother, unto wh

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God hath given all Power in Heaven and on Earth, *Matt.* 29. We are marching into a Country, that abounds with all manner of true Riches, Excellency, Glory and Happiness.

2. Consider, that we are not only Strangers but Soldiers, and under the Banner of Christ our Captain, who judges him that fights justly, *Revel.* 19. *Job* acknowledges *That there is a warfare appointed to all mortals upon Earth*, Job 7. But I may say, that this Warfare is chiefly for such as aim at the glorious Immortality and that God calls them to endure grievous and violent Encounters. Therefore St. *Paul* exhorts his beloved Disciple *Timothy to behave himself as a good Soldier in this just War, and to Fight the good Fight of Faith*, 1 Tim. 1. Now he that goes to War, must not incumber himself with the Enjoyments of this Life.

4. Moreover, consider that we are like to Soldiers who are engaged in an Enemies Country, not with a Design to Conquer and Establish our selves there, but only to obtain a free Passage, having only an intent to pass through into our own Native Soil. We don't desire to get into our Hands, the Inheritances and Possessions of the Worldlings, nor to rob them of their Crowns and Sceptres. We have no other Request to make to them, but that which the Children of *Israel* made to the Inhabitants of *Edom*, when they were going to the promised Land, *Num.* 29. We desire leave to pass peaceably, and go along by the King's High-way, to take possession of the Inheritance which God hath prepared for us, from the beginning of the World. We would not so much as tast of a bit of Bread without paying for it, nor drink a cup of Water without leave.

5. Consider that this Life is a Race, and the World the place to run in. Now such as are in a Race must take heed that Thorns do not catch hold of them in their Course, nor that their Feet sink into the Mire or the Clay; and that they may run swifter, they must cast off all Burdens and Incumbrances.

If

If therefore we will run in this Race in ſuch a manner, as that we may obtain the Prize, we muſt look that the Thorns and Briars of the World take not hold of us, and that we ſink not into the mire of the dirty Pleaſures of this Life. We muſt caſt away all the Burdens that overcharge us, and eſpecially the Burden of Sin, which is ſo grievous, that Nature it ſelf groans under it. 'Tis the Intent of St. *Paul*'s Exhortation, *Seeing we are compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of witneſſes, let us lay aſide every weight, and the Sin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us, and let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith, who, for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs*, Rom. 8. Heb. 12.

6. Conſider that our Life is a continual Wreſtling; for we wreſtle not only againſt Fleſh and Blood, but alſo againſt Principalities and Powers, againſt the Lords of the World, and the Rulers of the darkneſs of this Age, againſt Spiritual Wickedneſs in high Places, *Epheſ.* 6. 1 *Cor.* 10. Now he that intends to wreſtle well, muſt diet himſelf accordingly. If therefore for a Corruptible Crown, Men diet their Bodies, render them ſupple and pliant, and abſtain from Delights and Pleaſures; how much more reaſon have we to do the like for an Uncorruptible and Glorious Crown?

7. Conſider that God will have us to be conformable to the Image of his Son, and that we muſt follow his Footſteps. Now this good Saviour repreſents to us his own Condition, *Rom.* 8. 1 *Pet.* 2. *The Foxes have holes, and the birds of the Air have neſts, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head*, Luke 9. Therefore he made this Confeſſion before *Pontius Pilate*, *My Kingdom is not of this World*, John 8. And for that reaſon he reproves the groſs and carnal Expectations of the two Diſciples, as they were going to *Emaus*; O *Fools and ſlow of Heart, to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken*, Luk 24. *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered thoſe things and to enter into his glory?* According to his bleſſed Example, we muſt have but a little portion and

concernment in the World, and enter by many Afflictions into the Kingdom of God, *Acts* 24.

8. I judge that 'tis alſo neceſſary that we ſhould repreſent at every moment unto our ſelves, that to ſpeak properly, we can have but the Uſe and not the right Enjoyment of God's Creatures. We are intruſted with his Favours, as the Stewards of his Bleſſings and Riches. At every moment he may call us to an Account, and require from us a Reaſon of our Behaviour, and take from us our Enjoyments. We ſhould therefore look upon our Houſes and Poſſeſſions, as upon things that are lent unto us. For as we are not diſpleaſed to reſtore what we have borrowed, and what we enjoy, as long as it pleaſeth the lawful Owner to lend it; thus we ſhould gladly leave this preſent Life, and all our Worldly Poſſeſſions, in caſe we can but perſwade our ſelves, that all belong to God, and that he hath lent them but for a moment.

9. Moreover, 'tis neceſſary for us, to conſider the fruitleſs labours and pains that we are at, when we purchaſe the Riches of the Earth, and aſcend up to Dignities and Honours; for as the Husbandman, when he hath manured his Field and watered it with his Sweat, is many times deceived of all his fair Hopes and Expectations. Thus it commonly happens to the Covetous and Ambitious; they toil and labour in vain, the Good which they think to graſp, ſlides away between their Fingers as Water, or as Wax, that melts at the firſt approach of the Fire; and all the Honour which they expect to enjoy and embrace, are as a ſhadow that ſoon vaniſhes, or as a ſmoak that flies up out of their reach; when they have well labour'd for theſe Vanities, they reap nothing but Grief and Diſpleaſure.

10. Take notice of the ſmall Satisfaction that there is to be found in the moſt entire and perfect Enjoyment of the Advantages of this World. They are like Drink that leaves us ſtill a thirſt, and like

empty

empty Meat that cannot ſatiate our Longing; like the Waters of the Well of *Sychar*, whereof our Saviour ſaid to the Woman of *Samaria*, *He that Drinketh of this Water ſhall Thirſt again*, John 4. It happens to the Worldlings, as to him who ſleeps hungry, and dreams that he is eating, when he awakes, his Stomach is empty, *Iſaiah* 29. Or like to another that thinks in his ſleep that he drinks, but when his Eyes were open, he finds himſelf weary, and his Appetite unſatisfied; for he that hungers for Mony, is never contented with the Enjoyment of it; and he that thirſts for vain Glory, can never be pleas'd with all the great Honours and Grandeurs of the World, *Eccl.* 5. Inſtead of ſatiating his longing Appetite, theſe things ſerve but to encreaſe and augment it. The whole World was not large enough to ſatisfie the fooliſh Ambition of *Alexander*. For 'tis ſaid that he wept when a Philoſopher told him, there were yet many Worlds to Conquer. This Man, for whom ſix Foot of Earth was ſufficient, had a mind to Command over a thouſand Worlds; if there had been ſo many.

11. Conſider, that all the Treaſures, and Riches of the *Indies*, and the Pomp and Grandeur of the World, are not able to bring Peace to the Soul, nor Quiet to troubled Conſciences. When a poor Man hath got together a little Silver and Gold, or when a mean Perſon is rais'd to the higheſt Offices and Dignities, his Miſery continues ſtill, 'tho it changes its Appearance. Oft times 'tis ſo much the more unſufferable, in that it puts on a falſe Luſtre, and a deceitful Gloſs, in that ſuch are conſtrain'd to live always masked, to ſuppreſs the Pangs, the Grief the Sighs and Groans that often interrupt their prophane Smiles, and carnal Delights and Paſtimes.

Therefore our Saviour compares Riches to Thorns; for they prick and gaul, not only the Hands, but the Heart and the Bowels of ſuch as embrace them with affection. It may be alſo ſaid that they are like Lyons and Bears; for they are not to be caught without much

difficulty, and they are as uneaſie to be kept, becauſe we muſt take heed, that we be not bit with their venomous and deadly Teeth. If you had but tried the horrible Diſpleaſures, the ſenſible Griefs, and ſecret Fears, with the tormenting Cares that attend upon the moſt glorious Scepters, and the richeſt Crowns, you would never judge the ſaying of that Prince unreaſonable, who exclaim'd againſt his Royalty in this manner, *O Crown, if any did but know thy Weight, he would never lift thee up from the Ground.* The moſt part of the Pleaſures and Satisfactions of this Life, depend much upon Man's Imagination, and all this Grandeur and humane Glory is nothing but Wind. The Royal Prophet teacheth us, this Truth with much Elegancy, when he ſaith, *That every Man at his laſt ſtate, is altogether Vanity; ſurely every Man walketh in a vain ſhew, ſurely they are diſquieted in vain,* Pſal. 39. *Solomon,* the moſt Learned of all Kings, the Richeſt and moſt Magnificent Prince of his Time, had refuſed nothing to his Eyes to gratifie his Luſt; he had taſted of all the Delights and Paſtimes that can be imagined; but at laſt he found ſo little Satisfaction, and ſolid Content, that he was forced to acknowledge, *That all things under the Sun are but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit,* Eccleſ. 8. 24.

12. Chiefly we are to conſider, that if our Enjoyments have been wrongfully gotten, as *Balaam*'s Reward, *Achan*'s Wedge of Gold and Scarlet Cloak, *Gehazi*'s changes of Raiment, *Ahab*'s and *Jezabel*'s Vineyard, *Judas* his Thirty Pieces, *Numb.* 22. *Joſh.* 7. they can bring no real Content or Peace to the Soul; but they rather fill us with gripings of Conſcience, and with a fearful Deſpair, 2 *Kings* 5. 1 *Kings* 22. If the voluptuous Worldling, that hath enriched himſelf by Rapine, Uſury, or Extortion, did wring with his hands his ſumptuous Garments, where his Pomp and Pride appear'd, he ſhould viſibly ſqueez out the Tears of the afflicted and poor People, *Matt.* 27. If he did but reliſh the right taſt of the Liquors, that he drinks out of his Cups of Jaſper and Chriſtal, he ſhould find, inſtead of

Wine

Wine and Limonade, the Sweat and Blood of the Miſerable; and if he had but ſeriouſly lookt into the Silver and Golden Veſſels that are put upon his Table, he ſhould perceive the Marrow and the Bones of ſuch as he hath devour'd. Whoſoever becomes fat with the Subſtance of the Widow, and the Fatherleſs, ſhall never open his Coffers, but he may ſpy there the Image of the Devil and the helliſh Furies; he may hear the Crys and Groans of ſuch, whom he hath deſtroy'd by his Injuſtice and Cruelty. If ſuch eſcape unpuniſh'd here upon Earth, they ſhall ſurely feel the ſeverity of God's Vengeance hereafter. If there be no Sword to ſtrike them, nor Fire to conſume them, nor Leproſy to gnaw them, nor Dogs to tear them, nor Halter to hang them, they have a guilty Conſcience that will perform more than this. For 'twill be their Witneſs to accuſe them, their Judge to condemn them, their Rack, their Wheel, and Executioner to torture them. The time will come when the Worm that never dies, and the Fire that ſhall never be quench'd, ſhall torment and burn them.

13 Conſider, that 'tis poſſible to be very indigent in the midſt of a great Plenty. The Poets have had a Deſign to repreſent this by the Fiction of a Man thirſting in a River, whereof the Waters reach'd up to his Chin. The Covetous Miſer repreſents this miſerable Wretch. He may be alſo compared to the Fig-tree of the Goſpel, curſed by our Saviour Chriſt, that brought forth no Fruit for others, and withered for want of nouriſhment. Therefore a contented Poverty is more worthy than Riches with Diſcontent. Nature is ſatisfy'd with a little, Piety with leſs; but Covetouſneſs hath no meaſures. The Heathens have very well acknowledged, that he was the Richeſt who was moſt Content. For the more things you deſire, the more are wanting to you. It matters not much, if the Cup which is preſented to you, be of Gold or of Earth, ſo that there be Liquor enough to quench your Thirſt. I would rather drink of a little clear Stream of Water, than out of a

great River all muddy and troubl'd. A little quantity of ground is ſufficient to nouriſh a Man in this Life, but leſs neceſſary to cover him when he is dead. A little Mony ſatisfies to ſubſiſt honeſtly in the fear of God, but leſs is required to die happily, in the Favour and Love of our good Saviour. Kings, and the greateſt Monarchs have but one Body to Nouriſh, and to Cloath, as well as the meaneſt of their Subjects. They who enjoy leaſt in the World, uſe or rather abuſe the moſt of any, the things that they poſſeſs. Inſtead of envying the worldlings Opulency, let us meditate upon St. *Paul's* Excellent ſaying, *Having Food and Raiment, let us be therewith content*, 1 Tim. 6. And let us imprint in our Minds that other Sentence, *Piety with Contentment is great gains*, 1 Tim. 1.

14. Chriſtian Souls, caſt your Eyes upon all the things of the World that are moſt eſteem'd, and you ſhall find that their Poſſeſſion is but uncertain and of a ſhort Continuance; for Riches have wings to fly to Heaven as an Eagle. *All Fleſh is like Graſs, and the Glory of Man as the Flower of the Field, the World paſſeth away with all its Luſts*, Prov. 23. There needs but the pillaging of a Town, the breaking of a Merchant, or an unſucceſsful and contrary Suit in Law, to render thee Poor, and bring thee to Want. A little Sparkle of Fire is able to reduce all thy Riches into Aſhes, and to bring thee to extream Poverty. The leaſt frown can cover thy Face with ſhame and Confuſion, and caſt thee down from the higheſt humane Glory, into the deepeſt Abyſs of Diſgrace and Ignominy. The Wiſe Man informs us, *That he who truſts in his Riches ſhall fall.* We may ſay ſo of ſuch as rely too much upon great Mens Favour; for 'tis like a broken Reed that pierceth the hands of ſuch as lean upon it. There is nothing here below ſo conſtant as inconſtancy. If the Earth did not often change its Face and Appearance, it would not be Earth as 'tis; and if the World were not unconſtant, it would ceaſe to be a World. Therefore 'tis no wonder if the Heathens, who underſtood not

God's

God's Wiſe Providence, that governs the Natural Beings, and draws Light out of Darkneſs, have repreſented Fortune blind, mounting ſometimes on a Wheel, and in an Inſtant tumbling down again. How many Perſons do we meet with, reduced on a ſudden to Beggary, who a little before flouriſhed in all manner of Plenty? how many are caſt down into the Duſt, and become the ſcorn of the World, who were once raiſed to the higheſt Dignities, and the higheſt Honours? How many fall into the Contempt and Deriſion of the Vulgar, whoſe praiſes were once exalted up to Heaven? In a Word, how many do we ſee before our Eyes dragg'd along the Streets, ſhut up in cloſe Priſons, brought upon the Scaffolds and Gallows, who were once the Glory of the World, admired of all Men, and the Scourge of honeſt Men? When we run over, and conſider the ſtrange unexpected and ſudden Changes that we have ſeen in our Days, they ſeem to us as Dreams. St. *Paul* repreſents this great Inconſtancy of the World to take off our Hearts and Affections from it. *The Time*, ſaith he, *is ſhort, it remaineth, that both they that have Wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they poſſeſſed not; and they that uſe this World, as not abuſing it, for the faſhion of this World paſſeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. Becauſe of this great Inconſtancy of all the Worldly Advantages, St. *Paul* invites us to think upon the everlaſting Riches. *Charge* ſaith he, *them that are Rich, that they put not their truſt in uncertain riches, but in the living God, laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good Foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life*, 1 Tim. 6. For the ſame reaſon the Son of God adviſeth us, *not to lay up for our ſelves Treaſures upon Earth, where the moth and ruſt doth corrupt, but lay up for your ſelves Treaſures in Heaven, where the moth and ruſt do not corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through and ſteal*, Math. 6. A Wiſe *Perſian* was well acquainted with this Truth; therefore he hath left this Leſſon for Poſterity, *The World is con-*

stant to no Man, my Brother, apply thy self and thy heart to the great Creator of the World, and that shall suffice thee.

15. Consider, that if Riches and Honours leave us not in our Life time, or in case none takes them away from us by violence, 'tis most certain, that Death will deprive us of all, and will separate them from us for ever, *Psal.* 49. For when a Man dies he carries nothing with him, his Glory accompanies him not into his Grave, 1 *Tim.* 6. We brought nothing into this World, and 'tis certain that we can carry nothing out, *Job* 1. The Kings and the greatest Princes may speak in this Language, as well as the meanest Soldiers of Fortune, *Naked I came from my Mother's Womb, and naked I shall return.* All the Treasures, Riches, Scepters and Crowns, shall never advantage us after our Decease. What was *Nebuchadnezzar* the better for having had so great a number of People within his Dominions? they could not hinder him from lying down upon a Couch of Worms, nor preserve him from being eaten with Vermin, *Isaiah* 14. To that purpose did the Rich Glutton abound in all manner of Riches in his life-time? After his Decease he could not obtain a drop of cold Water to asswage his violent thirst, *Luke* 16. The Author of the Book of Wisdom was entred into this Meditation, when he represents the Worldlings, spending themselves in Lamentations for their former Follies and voluntary Blindness, *What hath pride profited us,* say they, *or what benefit hath Riches brought us? all these things are passed away as a shadow, as a post that runs swiftly, or as a ship that slides through the troubled Waves*, Wisd. 16. Our Heirs give us nothing of all our Substance but a Winding-sheet, a few Boards, or it may be some pounds of Lead; all consumes with us, and rots in our Grave in time. In short we must not only quit and abandon all our Honours, Dignities, Treasures and Riches, but we must also quit this Body, this Flesh and Bones, covered with this beautiful Skin. O Man! remember that thou art but Dust, and that shalt thou return to Dust.

16. *Saladine,*

16. *Saladine*, the famous Sultan of *Egypt*, hath left to Poſterity, an Illuſtrious Teſtimony of the Vanity of all Riches and Worldly Grandeur. For upon his Death-Bed he commanded that his Winding-ſheet ſhould be carried at the end of a Launce by an Herald, who was to proclaim, *Here is all that this great Prince hath carried away of his Riches, Glory, Principalities and Lordſhips, which he enjoyed upon Earth.*

17. Conſider that 'tis a great cauſe of Grief, that we know not who ſhall inherit the Fruits of all our Labours, which we keep with ſo much care and reſtleſs fears. Who knows but our greateſt Enemies, and that which is worſe, God's Enemies, ſhall cloath themſelves with our Spoils; and that which we have been ſo long gathering many Years, ſhall be ſpent in a Moment? Of this Vanity and Evil, the Royal Prophet complains in the 59. *Pſalm, Sure every Man walketh in a vain ſhew, ſurely they are diſquieted in vain, he heapeth up Riches, and knoweth not who ſhall gather them.*

18. Conſider well, Chriſtian People, the dangerous effects wrought in us by the Love of the World, and the Deceitfulneſs of Riches; it ſtifles in our Hearts the good Seed of the Goſpel, *Matt.* 3. It hinders it from growing up to Salvation; it keeps many from glorifying God, and making an open Profeſſion of the Truth. As 'tis ſaid of ſome of the chief Phariſees, that they believed in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but they would not confeſs him before Men, becauſe they loved more the Glory of Men, than the Glory of God. Therefore when *Cyrus* made Proclamation, that the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould have full Liberty in their own Country, to rebuild *Jeruſalem*, to repair God's Temple, to reeſtabliſh his neglected Services, there were many *Jews* that cared not to obey this Prince's Command, nor God's Call; becauſe they were ſettled in *Babylon*; they were too much wedded to the Pleaſures and Delights of that City, and therefore loath to part with their Concerns there for *Jeruſalem*. For the ſame Cauſe that young Man mentioned before, would not follow the

Saviour

Saviour of the World, nor obey his Command, because he had much Riches, and had settled his Heart and Affections upon them. As God's Ark and *Dagon* cannot dwell together under one Roof, 1 *Sam.* 5. So the Love of God and the Love of the World, can never subsist together; therefore St. *John* adviseth us, *Love not the World, nor the things that are in the World; if any Man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 John 2.

19. Take notice, that this is the Passion that stops so many in their first beginnings of Piety; For as *Lot*'s Wife was changed into a Statue of Salt, as soon as she had looked behind her; so when God sends us Angels to take us by the Hand, and drag us out of the Spiritual *Sodom*, there is nothing more dangerous, than to look with regret, and longings for carnal Delights, and Worldly Advantages, which we are then totally to quit. That alone is able to stop our Proceeding forward, to stifle our Zeal, and to cause all Pious Intentions to vanish into the Air; there we must imprint in our Minds this excellent Sentence of our Saviour, *No body that puts his hand to the Plough, and doth look back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.*

20. This is the Cause that so many Persons esteem'd well grounded in Religion and Piety, are prevailed upon at last to turn their Backs to God, and to make shipwrack of their Faith. What was the Reason of the *Israelites* murmuring so often, and desiring to return into *Egypt*? Was it not, as we have already taken notice, because their Hearts and Affections were settled and fixed in that cursed Land, from whence God had delivered them by so many Miracles? And wherefore did *Demas* leave St. *Paul* and Christ's Gospel? 'Tis because *he loved too much this present World.* In short, our own Experience confirms to us the Saying of our Saviour, *No Man can serve two Masters, for he will hate the one, and love the other, or he will cleave to the one, and despise the other, you cannot serve God and Mammon.*

21. Con-

21. Conſider, that if theſe Worldly Goods and Honours don't produce in us theſe woful and lamentable Effects, they often produce them in our Poſterity. Many would live happier in the World, and be honeſter Men, if their Parents had not left them ſo much Riches, and ſo many Honours to poſſeſs. Their Riches and Honours therefore draw upon them many evils, and oft times they caſt them headlong into ſeveral Debaucheries and Inſolencies. 'Tis that which fills them full of a ridiculous Vanity, and of unſufferable Pride, that renders them hateful to God and Man. In a word, 'tis that which makes them forget God, and to be unmindful of the Treaſures and Advantages of his Kingdom, *Prov.* 30. Therefore *Agar* preſented this Excellent Prayer unto God, *Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me, leſt I be full, and deny thee, and ſay, Who is the Lord? or leſt I be poor, and ſteal, and take the Name of my God in vain.* Wretched Man! to what purpoſe doſt thou labour ſo carefully to gather up Riches for thy Children? It may be that theſe Riches which thou takeſt from others, or which thou doſt get with the loſs of thy Soul, ſhall ſerve but to make *Golden Calves*, to be the ſubſtance of infamous Idols, as *Gideon*'s Gold plundered upon the *Midianites*, was employ'd in an Ephod, which became a ſnare to his Houſe, and to all *Iſrael*. Thus it happens many times, that the Goods which are gotten with the expence of much Blood and Swear, and the Honours unto which we climb up with ſo much earneſtneſs and paſſion, become a Snare to our Poſterity; they caſt them headlong into an Abyſs of Miſery.

22. I ſhould not forget that Death is a kind of Sleep; therefore in Holy Scripture, to die, and to fall aſleep, are to be underſtood in the ſame Senſe. Now as we cannot conveniently fall aſleep, unleſs we ſet aſide and forget all the troubleſome Affairs of the World; likewiſe 'tis altogether impoſſible to die comfortably and peaceably, if we baniſh not out of our Hearts betimes, all the fooliſh Fancies that diſturb us, and

all

all the ſharp Cares that undermine and conſume us.

23. To this purpoſe, prophane Hiſtory tells us of a remarkable Paſſage of *Cyneas*, a great Miniſter of State to *Pyrrhus*, King of *Epirus*; that when he ſaw his Maſter ſo buſie in raiſing an Army, to March againſt the *Romans*, he began to argue with him on this manner; *Sir, if it pleaſe God to grant you the Victory over the* Romans, *how would you imploy your ſelf next?* The King anſwered, we will then endeavour to conquer the reſt of *Italy*. And when we ſhall have *Italy* in our poſſeſſion, replied *Cyneas*, what ſhall we do afterwards? We will go againſt *Sicily*, ſaith the King. The diſcreet *Cyneas* continued to demand, and when we have all *Sicily*, what ſhall we do? *Pyrrhus* anſwered him, we will paſs to *Africa*, and take *Carthage*, and after that we may recover *Macedonia*, and command all *Greece* without Controul. But, Sir, replied *Cyneas*, when we ſhall have got all into our Poſſeſſion, what ſhall we do then? The King anſwered him with a ſmiling Countenance, My Friend, we will then repoſe our ſelves, and take our fill of Delight and Pleaſures. Then *Cynéas* began to tell the King, what hinders us now, Sir, from taking our Reſt and Delights? for we have all that in our Hands that we are going to ſeek ſo far, with ſo much Bloodſhed and Danger. We may apply this to our ſelves, we have moſt of us intricate and hidden Deſigns, which cannot be accompliſhed in the Age of one Man. We are afraid to die, as if Death had already caught us by the Throat; and yet we have ſo many Deſires to fulfil, as if we were all immortal. We build and adorn our ſumptuous Dwellings, as if we were never to leave the World; and we are always gathering ſo much, as if we had the Charge of providing for a Royal Army. Let us therefore in this Caſe imitate the wiſe Miniſter of State, let us ask our ſelves for what purpoſe are theſe vaſt Deſigns? what End do we propoſe to our ſelves of all our Labours and Care? What do we aim at when we run ſo many Dangers, and endure ſo many Inconveniencies? Our Souls

will

will anſwer us, without doubt, that 'tis with an intent, at laſt to reſt our Selves in Peace, to live at eaſe, and enjoy the Fruits of our Labours. Let us enjoy that Happineſs, and that Satisfaction at preſent, let us not ſtay to reſt our ſelves, until Death ſhall ſtretch us in our Graves. Let us be ſatisfied with the Goods that God hath already beſtowed upon us, and let us uſe them with Thankſgiving. Miſerable Wretches that we are! why do we labour and torment our ſelves for ſo many things? ſeeing that there is but one thing neceſſary, and that is Piety, the Fear of the Lord, and the Expectation of his Eternal Felicities; let us therefore make an Election of this good part, and it ſhall never be taken from us, *Luke* 10.

24. If we deſire to imprint in our Minds the Contempt of the World, and its Vanities, we muſt often meditate with ſerious attention, upon the Excellency of our Nature, ſanctified by Grace, upon the worthineſs of our Spiritual Calling, and upon the Riches and Glory of that Eternal Happineſs, which God hath provided for us in Heaven. 'Tis impoſſible to look upon theſe things as we ought, but we muſt conclude with the Apoſtle, that the World with all its Pleaſures and Treaſures, is not worthy of us. The Woman that appeared to St. *John* in a Viſion, was cloathed with the Sun, having the Moon under her Feet, and a Crown of twelve Stars upon her Head. This is a lively Image of Chriſt's Church in general, and of every faithful Soul in particular; for when we are cloathed and adorned with Jeſus Chriſt the Son of Righteouſneſs, we ought to trample upon all the Pomp and Magnificence of the World, and laugh at the Revolutions of the Ages, at the Vanities and Inconſtancy of the Earth. We muſt ſeek our greateſt Glory, and our moſt raviſhing Delights in the Doctrine of the twelve Apoſtles, who are ſo many Stars ſhining in the Firmament of the Church. Let the World alter its Face as often as the deceitful *Laban*; we ought to reſemble the Rays of the Sun, always alike. For our Glory is not as that of the World,

and

and of the Princes of this Age, which is reduc'd to nothing. 'Tis not ſettled upon a vain and failing Foundation, but upon the living and true God, who is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and will be the ſame for all Eternity, *Heb.* 14. Some glory in their Chariots, others in their Horſes, but we will boaſt in the name of the Lord our God, *Heb.* 13. *Pſal.* 29.

25. Conſider that God hath given us Faces looking up towards Haven, that he might thereby teach us to lift up thither alſo our Hearts, and carry thither our Affections and Deſires. He hath created our Souls and given them a ſpiritual Being, that they may take their Flight above all Earthly Matter. He hath adorned them with Immortality, that they might contemn all things that are not immortal as themſelves, all decaying and periſhing Enjoyments. In ſhort, ſeeing God hath prepared for us his Heaven, his Paradiſe, his Glory, his Treaſures, and the Rivers of our Eternal Delights, how can we confine our Deſires, and be content with this Duſt of the Earth, where Serpents crawl?

26. When *Alexander* was preparing to leave *Macedonia*, and go to the Conqueſt of the *Perſian* Monarchy, he gave away all his Goods to his Faithful Friends and Servants. *Perdiccas*, one of his Favourites, inquiring of him what he had reſerved for himſelf, the King anſwered, that he had reſerved HOPE. Thus ought we to diſpoſe our ſelves to depart out of the World, by leaving our Parents, Friends, and Eſtates, that we now enjoy. And if our Fleſh enquires of us, What we have kept for our ſelves, let us confidently anſwer, that we have kept our HOPE. I may aſſure you, Chriſtian Souls, that this your Anſwer ſhall be better grounded than that of *Alexander* to his Favourite. For this Prince left his Patrimony and Kingdom without any Conſtraint; but whether we will or no, we muſt leave the World. *Alexander* quitted certain Goods for a doubtful Hope; but we abandon periſhing

periſhing Enjoyments, for an Hope more ſecure and ſettled, than Heaven and Earth. *Alexander*'s Expectation was but of a Temporal Kingdom, and of a ſhort and vaniſhing Glory; but our Expectation is of an Incorruptible Crown, and Eternal Triumphs: Death that ſeized upon *Alexander* in the flower of his Age, put a period to all his Victories, and conſumed all his Trophies; but we are in hopes of conquering Death it ſelf, and this Hope will not deceive us, *Rom.* 5. This therefore being our Aſſiſtance, 'tis no wonder if St. *Paul* tells us, *That Hope is as a ſure and unmovable anchor to the Soul, piercing into the veil, that is, into Heaven it ſelf, where Jeſus Chriſt is entered in as our fore runner.*

26. God hath hid in the Earth, Gold, Silver, and Jewels, to teach us to trample upon the Riches and Pomp of the World. But he hath raiſed us up to the higheſt Heavens, or ſpiritual Treaſure, and our Immortal Crowns, that we might lift up thither our Hearts and our moſt earneſt Affections. He deſires that we ſhould imitate the Prophet *David*, who always comforted himſelf in his Baniſhment and Perſecutions with the Expectation of the Kingdom promiſed to him and confirm'd by *Samuel*'s Unction. God would have to do as the true *Iſraelites*, in the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; they had always their Hearts and Affections in *Jeruſalem*; in the midſt of their greateſt Sorrows, *Jeruſalem* was their all Comfort. Likewiſe we, who are wandring up and down in this miſerable Wilderneſs, who live in the World as in a *Babylon*, in a kind of Captivity, ought to Comfort our ſelves and rejoice, in Expectation of the Kingdom of Heaven, that hath been prepared for our Fruition from all Eternity, and whereof the holy Spirit is the true Unction, that hath confirmed the promiſe of it, and given us the Earneſt, *Pſal.* 137. *Gal* 4. The Eye of our Faith ſhould always be fixed upon our Celeſtial *Jeruſalem*, That is, the Mother of us all, and the Place of the Eternal Reſt, *Coloſ.* 3. The Apoſtle

stle therefore exhorts us, *If you be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God; think on things that are above, and not on things on the Earth, for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

28. When Men are going to live in another Country, where their Money will not pass, they furnish themselves with Bills of Exchange, and find the means of receiving it in other Coin. Therefore, seeing that our Gold, our Silver, and our present Jewels will not pass in Heaven, the place of our eternal abode, let us send thither betimes all our Riches and Treasures by Bills of Exchange. And that we may entrust them with an Assurance of a notable Advantage, and of a lawful Gain, let us put them into God's Hands, for he will restore an hundred times more in his Kingdom. Let us now distribute them to the Poor, to the Members of Christ's Mystical Body, and his divine Saviour will then acknowledge, that they have been given to his own Person. You that fear so much to lose your Money, get such Purses as will never decay, and make to your selves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when you fail, they may recieve you into Eternal Habitations.

29. Lastly, as the *Israelites*, when they had tasted of the Fruits of the Land of *Canaan*, desired with a most earnest Passion, to enjoy such a noble and delicious Country, and their Abode in the Wilderness became tedious and unsufferable: Likewise we who have the First Fruits of the Spirit, and a fore-tast of our Heavenly Paradise; let us aspire with our Hearts to the Heavenly *Canaan*, and let us long continually for those unspeakable Delights. All Worldly Pleasures should have no relish with us, and the greatest Sweetness of this Life should be turned into Bitterness; so that we may often present *David*'s Prayer unto God, *Remember me, O Lord, with the Favour that thou beareſt unto thy People; O visit me with thy Salvation, that I may see the good of thy chosen; that I may rejoice in the gladness*

neſs of thy Nation that I may glory with thine Inheritance, Pſal. 106.

To conclude this Diſcourſe, ſeeing that we have no laſting City here below, but that we ſeek for that which is to come, ſeeing that we know not the hour when God ſhall take us out of the World to introduce us into his holy *Jeruſalem*, *Heb.* 11. *Luke* 22. Let us take heed that our Hearts be not over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs, and with the Cares of this Life, leſt that Day ſurprize us unawares; and as the Holy Apoſtles left their Nets to follow Jeſus Chriſt, *Matt.* 24. Let us alſo leave the vain Cares, the ill-grounded Fears and deceiving Hopes that intangle our Souls; that when it ſhall pleaſe God to call us, we may be ready to anſwer his Heavenly Meſſage. Let us accuſtom our ſelves betimes, to will what God willeth, and to obey him without Reſiſtance. Let us caſt all our Cares upon God, and repoſe our ſelves upon his Wiſe and Fatherly Providence, 1 *Pet.* 5. Let us look with Contempt upon the World, upon its vain Grandeur, and decaying Riches, eſteem not any thing upon Earth, nor that which Man is able to Promiſe, or to procure, but eſteem and value the bleſſed Advantages that we expect in Heaven, and that are diſpoſed and entruſted in God's own hands, 2 *Tim.* 1. *Tit.* 2. Let us prefer *Job*'s Dunghil and Aſhes, before the proud Throne and glorious Monarchy of *Nebuchadnezzar*. Let us fanſie the beggary of poor *Lazarus* more happy, than the over-flowing abundance of the Rich Miſer. Imprint in your Minds, that bleſſed Saying of the Son of God, *What would it profit a Man if he gains the whole World, if he deſtroys himſelf and loſeth his Soul?* Luke 9. Let us have always before our Eyes the Image of that Rich Worldling, who had gathered much Wealth for his Soul, but his Soul was not wealthy nor rich before God. Remember what he ſaith to his Soul, *Soul, thou haſt much goods gathered up for many years, reſt thy ſelf, eat drink and be merry*; but what ſays God to him? *Thou Fool, this very night thy Soul ſhall be taken away from thee, and the things*

that thou hast gathered, whose shall they be? Instead of studying how to enlarge our Barns and Cellars, and to increase our Revenues and Treasures, let us labour to set some bounds to our Desires, and let us be content with what we have at present. Seeing we have but a breath in our Nostrils, and that we are cloathed with a mortal Body, let us not entertain such vast Designs, nor suffer our Longings to be perpetual. Let us always in every Place, be ready to end our Life, to put the last Stone to this Building, or rather let us be always in a Disposition of dissolving this Earthly Tabernacle Let us willingly break all the Bands and Ties that fasten us to this miserable Earth, that when Death shall come, it may have nothing to do but to cut the last string, by which our Soul is naturally joined to this languishing Body. Settle and fix your strongest Affections in Heaven, that where your Treasure is, your Hearts may be there also. Let us not be lull'd asleep, as the foolish Virgins, but having our Reins girded, and our Candles lighted, let us be prepared at every moment, to go to meet our Heavenly Spouse, and follow him into the Marriage Chamber. Let us be like a Ship at Anchor, ready to set sail with the first fair Wind, and as a Soldier entirely arm'd, that waits for the Day of Battle, and for the Signal to mount upon his Horse, that he may appear in the Field at the sound of the Trumpet. Let us send before hand, all our most precious Jewels, into the most glorious Palace of Eternity; that our Bags and Baggage being ready prepared, we may have nothing to do but to to take our last farewel. If any Consideration of Flesh and Blood hinders us, let us break asunder all these Bands by the strength of our *Nazereth*, that is, by the Virtue of God's Holy Spirit, which he hath been graciously pleased to grant unto us. And if the Persons that we love and cherish, as tenderly as our Souls; or those whom we are to reverence and honour, labour to stir up the Bowels of our Compassion, and to impede us in our Holy Resolutions, by base and earthly Considerations:

ſiderations: Let us tell them, as our Saviour did to *Mary Magdalen, touch me not, for I am going to my Father,* John 20. Stop not my Courſe, for I hold already the Prize, and the Promiſed Crown. In ſhort, as *Abraham* let the Ram looſe, whereof the Horns were taken in a Thicket, and offered it up in Sacrifice to God, *Gen.* 21. So let us free our Minds from all Worldly Cares and carnal Affections. Let us offer them up all to God, as a ſweet ſmelling Sacrifice, let us preſent them as a Burnt-Offering, conſume them in the Flames of an holy Zeal and Love of his Divine Majeſty. When the Chriſtian ſhall be thus prepared, he ſhall never ſtand in fear of Death, he will ſay to it with an aſſured Countenance, Come when thou wilt, O Death, I deſire no Reprieve. For a long while ago I have ſettled my Affairs, and wait for thee with Patience. The chief part of my ſelf is not here below, my Heart is already raviſh'd into Heaven, where God expects me with open Arms. Therefore notwithſtanding thy fearful Darkneſs, and the Deſign that thou haſt to deſtroy me, I will follow thee as couragiouſly and as joyfully as St. *Peter* did the Angel of night, that open'd to him the Gates of his Priſon, and freed him from his Chains, *Acts* 12.

A Prayer and Meditation for ſuch as prepare for Death, by a Renunciation of the World.

O *Infinite Lord of Heaven and Earth, who diſpoſeſt of Good and Evil! by thy Divine Providence and admirable Wiſdom, thou haſt not ſuffered us to have here an abiding City, that we might ſeek for that which is to come. Thou diſcoverſt before our Eyes the Vanity and Inconſtancy of all things under the Sun, that we might labour to attain to ſolid and everlaſting Advantages. Thou haſt placed and reſerved in Heaven inexhauſtible Treaſures of*

Riches, uncorruptible Crowns of Glory, and Eternal Triumphs, that thither we might transport our Hearts and Affections. The Source of Heavenly pleasures is with thee, that we might always be a-thirst for th' strong and living God; and that we might desire, with an Holy Earnestness, to look upon thy beautiful and glorious Face. Most glorious Creator, seeing thou hast bestowed on me an immortal Soul, suffer me not to be so wretched, as to dote upon these perishing Vanities; and seeing thou hast made it of a Spiritual and Heavenly Nature, suffer me not to be so unhappy as to wallow in this miserable Dust of the Earth, or to cast my self into the puddle and dirt of carnal Lusts. Give me Grace to renounce the World, and all the Vanities that the World adores. Give me Grace to possess all these decaying things, as not possessing them; that I may trample upon all the Pomp and Glory of the Age, that I may consider that the Gold, the Silver, the precious Jewels, whereof the apparent Beauty deceives the carnal Eye of Man, is nothing else but conrete Earth, that will dissolve again into Dust; that I may remember that after my Decease, all these things will profit me no more than that Earth and Stones that shall cover my dead Corps, or the Wood or Lead which shall be given to it for a Coffin. Give me Grace to despise all the Honours and Dignities, after which the Men of the World run so impatiently. For they are but like a Shadow that passeth away, and like the Smoak that ascendeth upout of our reach. Pluck out of my Heart the Cares of this Life, and all Sollicitousness for the Earth, that Death may never surprize me unawares, and that there may be nothing to stop or hinder me from going to thee, when thou shalt be pleased to call me, that my Soul being totally disingaged, and freed from all these Briars and Thorns, I may be always ready at every moment, to be offered unto thee as a living and a burnt Sacrifice. The Children of Israel waited for thine orders to pitch and move their Camp; give me also Grace to be as ready prepared to live and die, to remain in this Tabernacle, and to depart out of it, when thou shalt send thy Warrant. And as this People went over the River Jordan with a wonderful

Joy,

Joy, to take Poſſeſſion of the Promiſed Land: O that I might alſo leave this miſerable Wilderneſs with the like Tranſports to enter into the Celeſtial Canaan, *where the Milk and Hony of Divine Pleaſure, and of Eternal Comforts flow, as in their natural Channel. O God, who art my Portion, and mine Inheritance, caſt me me not away with the Men of the World, whoſe Portion is in this Life. Thou fillest their Paunch with thy good things, ſo that they are full, and leave ſufficiency for their Babes. But for me, all my Comfort is, that I ſhall behold thy Face in Righteouſneſs, and ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs.* Amen.

CHAP. IX.

The fifth Remedy againſt the Fears of Death, is to forſake Vice, and to apply our ſelves to the Practice of Piety and Sanctification.

GOD is ſo wonderful in all his Works, and he governs all his Creatures in ſuch a manner, that he draws from his very Enemies the acknowledgment of his Truth. You have an exellent example in *Balaam*, who beholding the Tents of the Children of *Iſrael*, breaks out into this Paſſionate Wiſh, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my laſt End be like his*, Num. 28. He was a wicked Varlet that loved the Wages of Iniquity, nevertheleſs he perceived by that Prophetical Light, with which his Soul was enlightened, how ſweet and comfortable Death was to ſuch as addicted themſelves, in this Life, to the Service and Fear of Almighty God, and how different 'tis to the Death of the profane Worldlings, who give themſelves over to their Luſts and Delight, in the unlawful Pleaſures of the Fleſh. For as Drunkards ſleep with a diſturbed and unquiet Fancy; likewiſe ſuch as are Drunken and full with the baſe and rotten Pleaſures of this Life, if they

be not hardned by Atheism, commonly depart out of the World with strange Frights, and horrid Gripings of Conscience, that cannot be expres'd. 'Tis otherwise with a good Christian; for as the Handicrafts Man who hath worked all the Day in his Shop, and the Husbandman, who hath wearied himself in following his Plough, lays himself down at Night in Peace: So 'tis with a good Christian, who hath carefully attended the works of Piety and Mercy in this Life. He takes his last Sleep with a great quiet of Mind and Satisfaction of the Soul. As righteous *Jacob*, when he travelled a Journey to his Mother's Friends, at his Father's Command, was not Frighted to see the Sun go down, tho' he was in the midst of an open Field, *Gen.* 28. but he laid himself down in peace, and slept sweetly, having no other Bed but the Earth, no other Pillow but a Stone, no other covering but the Heavens, nor other Curtains than the dark Shadows of the Night. Likewise a Soul sanctified with the Spirit of God, that walks in all the Commands of his Heavenly Father, shall never be astonished. For whersoever the Sun goes down, wheresoever Death Arrests him, he will look upon himself as in another *Bethel*, he will sleep quietly in the Lord Jesus, and in the most cruel Death, he will feel unspeakable and glorious Joys, and a Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, *Acts* 23.

We may take notice of this blessed Disposition in the Apostle St. *Paul*, who hath behaved himself with a good Conscience towards God, and towards Man, 1 *Cor.* 15. He had laboured more in his Ministry than all the other Apostles, therefore he stands in no fear of Death's Approaches. But rather we may see him full of Expectation and Desires to pass through Death into Glory and Eternal Felicity. This Disposition is no less remarkable in *Stephen*, the first Martyr of Christ, *Acts* 6. In the midst of these most grievous Torments he had a Countenance shining, as that of an Angel, which was a certain Testimony of his inward Peace of Conscience

ſcience, and of the extraordinary Joy of his Soul. For as the Wiſe Man informs us, *A merry Heart maketh a chearful Countenance*, Prov. 15. From the ſame Wiſdom proceeds this other Oracle, that foretels unto every one what ſhall happen unto him, *The Wicked is driven away in his Wickedneſs, but the Righteous hath hope in his Death.* Prov. 14. Eccleſ. 1. To this agrees the Excellent Saying of *Jeſus* the Son of *Sirach*, *It ſhall be well at the laſt with him who fears God, he ſhall find Favour at the day of his Death.* This Life is but a Moment that flies away apace, yet it determines our eternal Eſtate. It raiſeth us to the higheſt Glory of Heaven, or elſe it caſts us headlong into the deepeſt Abyſs of eternal Miſery. For what a Man ſoweth, that he ſhall reap; he that ſoweth in the Fleſh, ſhall reap of the Fleſh, Corruption; but he that ſoweth in the Spirit, ſhall reap of the Spirit, eternal Life.

If you are afraid of a cruel and unhappy Death, keep your ſelves from an evil and prophane Life. For commonly, as Man's Life is, ſo is his Death. The moſt part of thoſe who live in filthy Luſts and Impiety, depart with hardned Hearts, or in Deſpair. God's Patience wearied out, turns into a juſt Reſentment and Wrath. Commonly God leaves at the hour of Death ſuch as have left him in the Courſe of their Lives. He is inexorable to the Cries and Sighs of ſuch as have ſhut their Ears and Hearts to his holy Word, and his Fatherly Admonitions. He laughs at the Amazement and moſt ſenſible Torments of thoſe who trample upon his ſacred Commands, as he tells us, *Becauſe I have call'd, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no Man regarded, but ye have ſet at nought all my Counſel, and would none of my Reproof; I alſo will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh*, Prov. 1.

King *Ahab* deſired to hear a greatful Prophecy of happy things, of Victory over the *Syrian* Army; nevertheleſs he continued in his Impieties and Tyranny. Therefore the Prophet *Micah* was not afraid of his Diſpleaſure, but tells him boldly of the approach-

ing Judgment of God, which hanged over his guilty Head. Likewiſe ſome Sinners deſire to be flatter'd and ſooth'd up in their Extravagancies; they expect, notwithſtanding their Crimes, Promiſes for Joy and Proſperity. But we ſhould be falſe Prophets poſſeſſed with a lying Spirit, if we did but foretel to ſuch People, that a moſt lamentable and miſerable Death haſtens apace upon them; our Charity for them would be cruel if we did not labour to ſave them by Fear, as out of a Fire; if we did not ſhew them Hell with its Jaws open ready to ſwallow them up, and the eternal Torments wherewith God will puniſh all Impenitent and harden'd Sinners. Knowing what God's Vengeance is, we muſt perſuade Men to embrace Faith and Righteouſneſs, and if we did fail in this our Duty, their Blood would be required at our Hands.

To what Purpoſe have the Heathen Philoſophers diſcourſed ſo learnedly of the ſhortneſs of our Life? To what Purpoſe have many of their Princes entertained *Memento*'s of their Mortality, and ſlightly paſſed over ſuch Thoughts whilſt they reaped little Benefit from them, becauſe they did not not prevail upon them to reform their Lives, and by Conſequence to prepare for a bleſſed Death. 'Twas alſo to no purpoſe that *Balaam* deſired ſo paſſionately to die the Death of the Righteous, and that his laſt end might be like a juſt Man's, *Numb.* 23. becauſe he lived the Life of Sinners, and continued in their Abominations and Idolatry, *Numb.* 31. Therefore died he as they, and was comprehended in their Puniſhment. As he was a Partner in their Crimes, it was but juſt and reaſonable, that he ſhould ſhare in their Calamity, and be a partaker of their Torments.

To abandon Vice and Sin, is to take from Death its Venom, and all its fiery Darts. 'Tis to pluck from this furious Beaſt its Teeth and Claws. 'Tis to break the Cords and Chains, by which the Devil drags us into eternal Damnation. 'Tis to deſtroy the Monſters that fright us, and ſtifle the Furies that purſue us. In ſhort,

it tends to change Hell and its grievous Torments into Heaven and its Glory. There was never yet any Perſon that lived an Holy and Religious Life, but he died happily in the Favour of God. Now that the Lord knocks, open unto him the doors of your Hearts, and at the Hour of Death, he will open unto you the Gates of Heaven. Preſent and give him whilſt you are alive, your Bodies and Souls, and doubtleſs he will accept them, and confirm the Gift with his own Seal. Here below he will enrich you with his Graces, and Crown you at laſt with his Glory. *Bleſſed are they that die in the Lord*; but to die in the Lord, we muſt live to the Lord, that we may be able to ſay with St. *Paul*, *Whether we live, we live to the Lord, whether we die, we die to the Lord, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.*

To perſuade us to this Riligious Duty, we muſt conſider in the firſt Place, the Command that he gives us of loving him, fearing him, of Repenting of our Sins, and of walking in his holy Laws. Unto this he exhorts us in the Writings of the Old Teſtament, as in the 6th of *Deutronomy*, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might.* And in the 26th of *Iſaiah*, *Sanctifie the Lord of Hoſts himſelf, and let him be your fear and your dread.* And in the 55th Chap. *Let the Wicked forſake his way and the Unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have have Mercy upon him to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* In the 2 Chapter of *Joel*, *Turn ye to the Lord with all your Heart, and with Faſting, and with Weeping, and with Mourning.* And in the 1ſt Chapter of *Malachy*, The Son honours the Father, and the Servant his Lord; *If therefore I am your Father where is the Honour due unto me? If I am your Lord, where is the fear of my Name?*

2. Jeſus Chriſt is not come to aboliſh the Law, but to fulfil it, *Matt.* 5. Therefore in the New Teſtament, he calls upon us as frequently to ſtudy Piety and Vertue. As in the 5th Chapter of St. *Matthew*, *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men that they ſeeing your good Works, may*

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glorifie your Father which is in Heaven. And in the 1st Chapter of *Mark*, *Repent ye and believe the Gospel*, And St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, exhorteth in this manner, *I beseech you, brethren, by the Mercies of God, that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, Holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable Service, and be not conformed to this World; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your Mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect Will of God; hate evil and cleave to that which is good,* Rom. 12. and in the 13 Chapter, *Walk honestly as in the day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambring and Wantonness, not in Strife and Envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof.* And in the 1 *Cor.* chap. 16. *Awake to Righteousness, and Sin not.* And in *Ephesians* the 4th. *Put off, concerning the former Conversation, the Old Man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Lusts, and put you on the New Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness.* And in *Colos. the* 3. *Mortifie your Members which are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleanness, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness, which is Idolatry.* In the 1 Epist. *Thess.* 5. Chap. *Watch and be sober, abstain from all appearance of evil.* And in *Phil.* 4. *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any Vertue, and if there be any Praise, think on these things.* I might with as much ease number the Stars of the Sky, as reckon up all the Passages that call upon us, and exhort us to an Holy Life.

3. God not only commands us to apply our selves to Holiness, Justice, and Innocency of Life; but he proposes himself for our Example, that as the obedient and good Children delight to imitate their Fathers Vertues, we also might endeavour to copy out in our Lives, the Divine Perfections of our Heavenly Father, and imprint in our Hearts his sacred Image. Therefore in 11. *Levit.* he tells us, *Be ye Holy, for I am Holy.*

Holy. And St. *Peter* repeats the ſame Paſſage in this manner, *As he that called you is Holy, ſo be ye alſo Holy in all manner of Converſation; for 'tis written, be ye Holy for I am Holy,* 1 Pet. 2 And our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt gives us the ſame Leſſon, *Love your Enemies, bleſs thoſe that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that perſecute you, that you may be Children of your Father that is in Heaven,* Matth. 5. *For he cauſeth his Sun to riſe upon the good and bad, and ſends his Rain upon the Juſt and the Unjuſt; be therefore ye perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect.* The Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſpeaks in the ſame manner to the *Epheſians, Be followers of God as dear Children, Put off the Old Man, and put on the New Man, which is created according to God in Juſtice and true Holineſs,* Chap. 6. And in the 3d *Coloſ. Now put off all theſe, Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blaſphemy, Filthy Communication, out of your Mouth. Lie not one to another, ſeeing that ye have put off the old Man, with his deeds, and have put on the new Man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the Image of him that created him.*

4. Meditate ſeriouſly upon the excellent and precious Promiſes that God hath given to ſuch as addict themſelves to Piety and good Works. As in the 20. *Ex. I ſhew Mercy unto a Thouſand Generations of them that love me, and keep my Commandments.* And 1 *Sam.* Chap. 2. *I will Honour them that Honour me.* And in *Iſaiah.* 3. he ſays to the Righteous, *that it ſhall be well with them, for they ſhall eat the Fruit of their doings.* And in the 5th of St. *Matthew,* our Saviour ſaith, *Bleſſed are the pure in Heart for they ſhall ſee God.* And in the 6th Chap. *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God and its Righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you over and above.* And in Chap. 7. *Whoſoever ſhall call me Lord, Lord, ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.* St. *Paul* ſpeaks thus to the *Romans, If by the Spirit you mortifie the deeds of the Fleſh, you ſhall live,* Chap. 8. And in the 1 Epiſt. to *Tim. Piety or Godlineſs is profitable unto all things, having the promiſes of this preſent Life, and of that which is to come.* And

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in *Revel.* 21. *Blessed and Holy is he who hath part in the first Resurrection, the second Death shall have no Power over him.*

5. Consider that the whole World trembles at the Denunciation of the Judgments, with which God threatens to punish all impenitent Sinners, as in *Exod.* 20. *I am the Lord thy God, strong, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me.* And in 1 Sam. Chap. *I will Honour them that Honour me, and will Despise them that despise me.* And St. *Mat.* Chap. 12. *Of every idle Word that Man shall speak, they shall give an account at the day of Judgment.* And St. *John* Chap 3. *Except a Man be born of Water and the Spirit,* that is, of a Spirit purifying like Water, *he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* And in *Rom.* 8. *They who are in the Flesh cannot please God.* And in 1 *Cor.* Chap. 6. *Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* And the Apostle to the *Hebrews,* is not content to tell us, *That without Holiness no Man shall see God*; But he saith something more, *That if we sin wilfully, after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a terrible expectation of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, we shall devour the Adversaries; for our God is a consuming Fire,* Chap 10. And in the *Revelations,* 'tis not only said, that in the Holy *Jerusalem* there shall no unclean thing enter, or that committeth Abomination, or a Lye, and that God will shut out the Dogs, the Witches, the Fornicators, the Murderers, the Idolaters, and whosoever doth love, or do a lye, *Chap.* 2. 22. But the Spirit of God assures us, that the Timorous that is, such as are more afraid of Man than of God, the Unbelieving, the Execrable and Murderers, the Fornicators and Witches, the Idolaters and Liars shall have their Portion in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death, *Chap.*

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6. When we ſhould ſpeak the Language of Angels, when we ſhould give all our Goods to nouriſh the Poor, and when we ſhould give our Body to be burn'd, if we have no Charity, we are but like the ſounding Braſs, and like the tinkling Cymbal. When we ſhould be able to perform Signs and Wonders, if we be not cloathed with Innocency and Holineſs, if we be not adorned with Meekneſs and Love, Chriſt will at laſt treat us as the fooliſh Virgins, with a *Depart from me, I know ye not.* When we ſhould be able to caſt the Devil out of other Men, it will avail us nothing, unleſs we can alſo caſt him out of our own Hearts, with all the wicked Luſts that he cheriſhes there. To that purpoſe ſhall ſuch cry out at the great day, *Lord, Lord, have not we Propheſied in thy Name? Have not we caſt out Devils in thy Name? Have not we done many Miracles in thy Name?* Jeſus will return them this ſad Anſwer, *Depart from me ye workers of Iniquity.*

7. Conſider, that whatſoever be your Portion of the Advantages of this Life, when you ſhall come to die, you ſhall carry away neither your Riches, your Honours, nor your Pleaſures. But if you be Rich in Faith and good Works, if you be cloathed with Holineſs, and crowned with Righteouſneſs: if Piety and the Service of God be your delight, you ſhall carry away out of the World, this Spiritual Treaſure, the Celeſtial Glory, and this Angelical Satisfaction. 'Tis what the Holy Spirit teacheth when it tells us, *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they reſt from their Labours, and their Works follow them.*

8. Let us always have before our Eyes the Bleſſed Examples of ſo many Saints, who have trac'd us the way to Heaven, by their Piety and good Works; they are entred into the Paradiſe of God, and the Glory of his Kingdom. 'Tis reported of a Painter, that when he had a deſign to repreſent an accompliſh'd Beauty, he borrowed from divers Objects, the Excellencies and Perfections with which he was to adorn his Picture. From the Lilies he took their Whiteneſs, from the Roſes

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their red Tincture from another Object the wonder of the Eye, from another the Coral of the Lips and so of the other Parts. Likewise to restore in our Souls the Image of God defaced by Sin, we must borrow the Vertues and Excellencies of Primitive Men. For Example, represent always to your selves *Abel*'s Innocency, *Enoch*'s Holy Life, *Noah*'s Justice, *Abraham*'s Faith, *Lot*'s Hospitality, *Isaac*'s Obedience, the Faithfulness of *Jacob*, the Chastity of *Joseph*, the Patience of *Job*, the Meekness of *Moses*, the Zeal of *Phineas*, the Constancy of *David*, the Wisdom of *Soloman*, the Piety of *Josias*, the Prayers of *Daniel*, the Tears of *Jeremiah*, the Fastings of *Hester*, the Holy Earnestness of the Woman of *Canaan*, the Devotion of *Cornelius*, the Charity of the *Samaritan*, the Alms of *Dorcas*, and of the Poor Widow, the *Publican*'s Humility, the good Thief's Repentance, the Tears of *Mary Magdalen*, the Weepings of *Peter*, the undaunted Courage of St. *Paul*, and his indefatigable Spirit, and the glorious Martyrdom of St. *Stephen*, and of so many noble Souls, of all Ages and Sexes, who have gone to the Torments with as much Joy as to Feasts, and to Triumphs; and who have Sealed with their Blood the Truth of the Gospel, with an undaunted Resolution. *Seeing therefore that we are encompassed with so great a Cloud of Witnesses, let us pursue with Constancy the Race that is set before us.*

9. Chiefly, *Let us look to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith.* For he hath left us an Example that we might follow his foot-steps. All the Vertues that we admire in these Faithful Souls, are but like many little Beams of the Son of Righteousness, and a weak Image of his Glory. There is no Fire so perfect, but yields a Smoak; nor Righteousness so accomplish'd, but hath its Imperfections, whilst we are cloathed with this weak Flesh. The Behaviour of the most Holy and Perfect, is spotted with many Infirmities; but our Lord and Saviour is the Lamb without Spot or Blemish, in whose Mouth there was no Guile. For 'twas necessary that they should have such an High Priest, who

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is holy, blameleſs, ſeparated from Sinners. The perfect Image of all Vertues was never found in any mortal Man on Earth, but Jeſus Chriſt is the faireſt amongſt the Sons of Men, his Lips are full of Grace; in him alone we have a perfect Model of Virtues, and of all imaginable Perfections. Therefore when the Apoſtle had perſuaded the *Romans* to renounce the Luſts of the Fleſh, Drunkenneſs, Anger, Envy, and ſuch like Sins, inſtead of making an enumeration of the Vertues oppoſite to theſe Vices, he thinks it ſufficient to propoſe Chriſt's Holy Example, *put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ſaith he, to teach us, that all the Vertues and Graces centre and meet in the Sacred Perſon of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, in the higheſt degrees of Perfection.

10. We are ſo much the more obliged to imitate Jeſus Chriſt, and to imprint in our Hearts his Holy Image, becauſe that he is not only our Father, our Lord, our King, but he is alſo the Bleſſed Head of that Body, whereof we are Members. 'Tis not proper to unite defil'd and prophane Members to an Head ſo Glorious, and ſo Holy. Whoſoever gives himſelf over to his Luſts and Delights, in the Corruption of Sin, maims, as much as in him lies, that Sacred Body of the Son of God. This Conſideration drew from St. *Paul* this Expreſſion, *Shall I take the Memberss of Chriſt for to make them the Members of an Whore?*

11. The Divine Spirit dwelling in our Hearts, is a great Obligation to Holineſs of Life. Know you not that you are the Temple of God, and the Holy Ghoſt dwelleth in you? *Corinth.* 1. Shall we be ſo baſe as to uncover our filthy and dirty thoughts before ſo Holy and Divine a Gueſt? Shall we be ſo bold as to erect upon his Altar, Idols that may provoke him to Jealouſie? His Eyes are ſo clean and pure, that they cannot ſuffer the Sight of Iniquity and Sin. 'Tis that which moſt afflicts and grieves him, therefore when St. *Paul* had adviſed the *Epheſians, That no corrupt Communication ſhould proceed out of their Mouth, but that which is good,*

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to the use of edifying, that it may minister Grace unto the hearers, he adds immediately after, *Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* And if there be any that are not moved with the presence of such a Glorious Person, let him tremble at this fearful Threatning, *If any destroy the Temple of God, God will destroy him*, 2 Cor. 3.

12. There were two Tables of Stone in the Ark of God's Covenant, where God himself had written his Law, which he gave to his People by the Ministry of *Moses*, 1 *Kings*. 6. Seeing that the God of all Mercy hath chosen thy Soul to be his Sanctuary, and the Pavilion of his Glory, his sacred Commandments must be there engraven upon the Table of thy Heart, thou must be moved with an earnest desire for the Service of God, and for an exact Conformity to his Holy Will, that we may be able to say to you, what St. *Paul* said to the Christians of his Days, *Ye are manifestly declar'd to be the Epistle of Christ, written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in the Tables of Stone, but in fleshly Tables of the Heart?* And that thou mayest say with the Royal Prophet, *My God, my delight hath been to do thy Will, thy Law is within me*, 2 Cor. 3.

13. Let us represent to our selves continually, the great and many Obligations that we have to fear God, to love him, to serve him. He is the most perfect of all Beings, he is Perfection it self, infinitely lovely; so that if there were neither Hell to punish us, nor Heaven to reward us; he ought to be serv'd and reverenced, because of himself, and of his Divine Perfections. This Consideration causeth *Jeremiah* to break forth into these lofty Expressions, *Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations, for to thee doth it appertain, forasmuch as among all the Wise Men of the Nations, and in all their Kingdoms, there is none like unto thee*, Jer. 10.

14. Whilst we are travelling here below, we are not capable of an High and Celestial Meditation. It belongs only to the Angels, whom God hath invested with Light and Glory; and to the Heavenly Spirits

Spirits whom he hath admitted to the Contemplatio of his Face. Let us therefore ſeriouſly conſider the Bleſſings and Favours which we have received from this great God, who hath created us in his own Image, and who hath made us to be the Maſter-pieces of all his inferior Wonders. He hath put in us an Epitome of the Beauties and Perfections of the World. He hath given us a Being, as to the Sun, Moon, and Stars; a Life like the Plants, Senſe as to the Animals, Underſtanding as to the Angels. In ſhort, he hath infuſed into this Body faſhioned with his own Fingers an Immortal Soul of an Heavenly Subſtance, a Beam of his Glory, and a living Image of his Godhead. My Soul, therefore bleſs the Lord, and all that is within me bleſs his Holy Name; my Soul, bleſs the Lord, and forget not all his Benefits, *Pſal.* 103.

'Tis for Man's ſake God hath ſtretched out the Heavens, ſettl'd the Earth, poured out the Waters, and preſcribed Limits to the roaring Sea. For Man's ſake this gracious Creator hath adorned the Heavens with ſuch a number of Beautiful Stars, hath given to the Moon its various Motions, with its wonderful Influences, hath placed in the Sun ſuch a bountiful Source of Light, and hath appointed the invariable Succeſſion of the Seaſons, of the Days, Months, and Years. For Mans Advantage, and lawful Recreation, ſo many Birds Sing and Fly in the open Air, ſuch prodigious numbers of Fiſhes, ſwim in the Seas and Rivers; the Earth is beautified with ſo many delicate Flowers, brings forth ſo many wholeſome Herbs, and pleaſant Fruits, nouriſheth ſo many kind of Animals, and ingenders in its Bowels, Gold, Silver, and precious Stones. In a word, for Man's ſake God hath Created the World, filled it full of ſo many Riches, and beautified it with ſo many excellent Perfections. Therefore 'tis no wonder if the Royal Prophet is raviſh'd into an holy Admiration, and burſts forth into theſe Expreſſions, O *God, what is Mortal Man, that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man that thou doſt regard him! Thou haſt*

made him a little leſſer than the Angels, thou haſt Crowned him with Glory and Honour, thou haſt eſtabliſh'd him Governour over the Works of thine Hands, thou haſt put all things under his Feet, the Sheep, and the Oxen, and the Beaſts of the Fields, the Birds of the Air, and the Fiſhes of the Sea. If the Example of this great Prophet is not able to ſtir you up, and perſuade you to the Fear and Worſhip of God, by the Conſideration of the wonderful Works of the Creation; Hear what the Angel declares that took his Flight through the middle of the Heavens, having the Eternal Goſpel in his Hand: *Fear God, and give him Glory, Worſhip him that liveth for ever and ever; for he hath made the Heavens and the Earth, the Sea and the Fountains of Waters.*

16. We have not only in God our Life, Motion and Being, but he hath not left himſelf without Witneſs, in doing good and ſending Rains from Heaven, fruitful Seaſons, filling our Hearts with Food and gladneſs, He nouriſhes us with Manna, and gives us to drink of his Abundance. He overſhadows us with his Protection, and enlightens us with his Heavenly Fires. He hath always his Eyes open to our Calamities, and his Ears to our Sighs and Groans. He is always near them that call upon him, yea, them that call upon him Faithfully. Let us therefore ſay as *David, I Love the Lord, becauſe he he hath heard the Voice of my Supplication, for he hath inclined his Ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him all the days of my Life,* Pſal. 14. Pſal. 116.

17. Meditate often upon the Advantages, that are common to thee with the reſt of Chriſtians, and upon the Bleſſings and Favours which God hath vouchſafed to thy Perſon in particular. Remember how many times he hath ſent his Aſſiſtance from above, how he hath wrought Miracles to deliver thee from the Evils that threatned thee. Conſider how liberal he hath been to thee in the whole courſe of thy Life, what admirable and noble means he hath employ'd to crown thee with his moſt precious Favour: then thou wilt ſay with *Jacob, O God, I am not worthy of the leaſt*

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of all thy Mercies, and of all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy Servant, Gen. 32. And with *David, many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful Works, which thou haſt done, and thy Thoughts which are to us-ward, they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee. If I ſhould declare and ſpeak of them, they are more than can be numbered.* And being raviſh'd into an holy Admiration, thou wilt ſay in the Language of the ſame Prophet, O God, who is like unto thee, who when thou haſt made me ſee many diſtreſſes and evils, at laſt, thou haſt reſtor'd me to Life, and drawn me out of the Depths of the Earth, *Pſal. 71. Thou ſhalt increaſe my greatneſs again, thou wilt Comfort me.* And elſe where, *What ſhall I render to the Lord, for all the Benefits that he hath done unto me?* Pſal. 116.

18. The Conſideration of God's redeeming us, chiefly requires us to deny our ſelves, and conſecrate our ſelves to his Service. For Slaves don't belong to themſelves, but to him who hath redeemed them and paid their Ranſom. As when God had delivered the Children of *Iſrael* from the *Egyptian* Bondage; he gave to them his Law and Ordinances in Mount *Sinai.* Thus God hath redeemed us from the Tyranny of the Devil, of the World, of Sin, of Death, of Hell, and from the Power of all our Enemies, that we might ſerve him without Fear in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all the Days of our Life, *Luke* 1. He hath given himſelf a Ranſom for us, that we might become a peculiar People to him, Zealous of good Works, *Tit.* 2. You are bought with a Price, Glorifie then God in your Bodies, and your Souls that belong to God, 1 *Cor.* 6.

19 One Love muſt kindle another. The ſacred Fire come down from Heaven, muſt inflame our Hearts with an holy Zeal for his Glory. God hath had ſo much love for us that he hath given his only Son, that believing we might not periſh but have everlaſting life. He hath not ſpared his Son, who is the Brightneſs of his Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon. He hath delivered

him to Death for us, yea, to the ignominious Death of the Croſs. And is it not juſt that we ſhould love him, above all Worldly things, a God ſo good and merciful? Is it not juſt that we ſhould Love nothing but him, and for his ſake? Is it not reaſonable that we ſhould offer unto him our Bodies and Souls, as a living and holy Sacrifice, pleaſing to his Eye? And if we have any Luſt that offends him, is it not juſt that we ſhould willingly leave it betimes, when it ſhould appear as uſeful to us as our Hands, and Feet, and as dear as the Apple of our Eyes? Whoſoever doth not deny himſelf, is not worthy of him, *Matt.* 10.

20. We muſt treat the Body of Sin, which the holy Scripture ſtiles the *Old Man*, and the *Firſt Adam*, almoſt in the ſame manner, as Chriſt the *New Man*, and the *Second Adam*, was treated upon the Croſs, *Rom.* 6. Inſtead of flattering it, and ſeeking to ſatisfie its Luſts, we muſt deprive it of all its Pleaſures, make it drink Vinegar and Gall, tear its Head with Thorns, bind and chain its Affections, and nail them to the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with all its inordinate and brutiſh deſires. *Mortifie therefore your Members, that are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiſcence, and Covetouſneſs, which is Idolatry,* Gal. 5. Coloſſ. 3.

21. To live in Sin, to delight our ſelves in Iniquity, is to fruſtrate, as much as in us lies, our good Lord, from that Principal end which he deſigned in leaving for a while the Celeſtial Abode of his Glory and Immortality. For he is come into the World to deſtroy the Works of the Devil. Now the chief Work of the Devil, the great Enemy of our Salvation, in which he takes moſt Delight and Glory, is Sin, with which he enſnares Mankind. For by Sin, Death, and all kind of Calamities are uſhered into the World, *John.* 3. *Rom.* 5.

22. 'Tis to trample upon the only Son of God, to affront the Spirit of Grace, and eſteem the Blood of the

the Covenant, a prophane thing. 'Tis to render ineffectual the Death and Paſſion of our good Redeemer, and pull down his Croſs; for he hath carried our Sins in his Body upon the Croſs, that dying unto Sin we might live unto Righteouſneſs. He hath given himſelf for his Church, to ſanctifie it, and to render it a Glorious Church not having ſpot or wrinkle, nor any ſuch thing. If the Blood of Bulls and of Goats, and the Aſhes of an Heifer ſprinkled, did ſanctifie the uncleanneſs of the Fleſh, how much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who through the Eternal Spirit, offer'd himſelf without Spot to God, purge your Conſciences from dead Works to ſerve the living God? *Heb.* 9.

23. Our Lord and Saviour was not only Dead, but alſo Buried, to teach us to bury alſo with him our Sins, and ſhut up in his ſacred Tomb all our carnal Luſts. Don't you know, all ye that have been baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, that you have been baptized into his Death? We are then Buried with him in his Death by Baptiſm.

24. This Glorious Saviour is riſen from the Dead, and hath left the Sepulchre with his Funeral Attire, to teach us to riſe to Newneſs of Life, and to leave in our Grave the Sin that encompaſſeth us, and the tyes of our Corruption, that bind us ſo faſt. To ſpeak in St. *Paul's* Language, *As Jeſus Chriſt is riſen from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, we alſo ought to walk in newneſs of Life. For if we are made one Plant with him, by a conformity of his Death, we ſhall alſo be one, by a conformity to his Reſurrection; and as Chriſt who is riſen from the Dead, Dies no more, Death hath no more dominion over him. Likewiſe we ought to apply our members as inſtruments of Iniquity unto Sin, but we ought to apply them unto God as being made alive from the Dead,* Rom. 6. *He is dead and riſen again, that he might have dominion over the dead and the living; if any be in Jeſus Chriſt, let him be a new Creature; old things are paſſed away; behold, all things are become new*; Rom. 14. Cor. 5.

25. Jeſus Chriſt after his Glorious Reſurrection, aſcended up into Heaven, to lift up thither our Hearts, and to draw thither our Affections, and to teach us to reform our Manners, to live an Holy, Angelical, and Celeſtial Life. If you are riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things that are above, where Jeſus Chriſt ſits at the right hand of God; think upon things above, and not upon things on the Earth, *Coloſſ.* 3.

26. There is nothing in the World ſo lovely as Vertue. 'Tis the Delight and Pleaſure of Heaven, the Daughter of the living God, and the true and lively Image of the great Creator. O bleſſed Dreſs of a Chriſtian Soul, O rich and precious Ornament of God's Children, O Heavenly Grace, what rare and ſtrong Charms haſt thou to win the Hearts and Affections of all ſuch, as behold thy Perfect and Divine Beauty!

27. On the contrary, there is nothing ſo ugly and ill-favoured as Sin; 'Tis a woful Monſter of Hell, and a frightful Image of Satan. I confeſs it diſguiſes it ſelf, and takes a beautiful Appearance; but if you lift up this borrowed Mask, you ſhall perceive the Devil's fearful Looks, and the Depths of Hell.

28. Faithful Souls, weigh in the Balance of his Sanctuary, the dreadful Evils, that Sin hath brought into the World. It hath blotted out God's Image, and defaced the Beauty of the Creation. It hath Separated Heaven and Earth, and kindled a grievous War between God and Man. 'Tis an heavy burden under which Nature it ſelf groans; for becauſe of Sin, all Creatures Sigh, and are in Labour until now.

29. It continues yet its woful Effects. For 'tis Sin that grieves the Holy Spirit, afflicts the Angels, offends the Weak, hardens the Ignorant, and that gives an occaſion to the Enemies of God, to blaſpheme his Holy Name, and curſe his Goſpel, *Rom.* 8. 'Tis Sin that gratifies the Devil, rejoyceth Hell, upholds the tottering Walls of *Babylon*, ſtrengthens the Kingdom of the Prince of Darkneſs, and that cauſeth him

him to work with Efficacy in the Hearts of the Children of Diſobedience, *Eph.* 2.

30. Liſt up your Eyes to the Croſs of Jeſus Chriſt, and you ſhall perceive how abominable Sin is; for neither in Heaven, nor on Earth, could be found an Offering able to make Expiation for it. God hath choſen rather to puniſh it in the Perſon of his only begotten Son, than to leave it unpuniſh'd. O how grievous and deep is the ſtain of Sin, ſeeing that nothing but the Blood of a God can waſh and cleanſe it!

31. When you meditate upon our Lord's Death and Paſſion, exclaim not againſt *Judas*'s Treaſon, the Phariſees Envy, the Peoples Mutiny, don't lay the Blame upon the Impiety of *Caiphas*, the Injuſtice of *Pilate*, or *Herod*'s Scoffs and Jeſts, nor upon the Cruelty of the *Roman* Soldiers; but be angry againſt your own Sins, and let an Holy Diſpleaſure riſe in you againſt your iniquities and crimes. Say to your ſelves, our Sins, our Sins alone have betray'd Chriſt's innocent Body, bound and faſtened the Lord of Glory to this ignominious Croſs, and deliver'd him into the Executioners Hands. Our Sins have Crowned him with Thorns, nailed him to the Wood, deliver'd to him Gall and Vinegar to drink. In ſhort, our Sins have pierced his Hands and Feet, and open'd his Side. You would abhor the ſighs and acquaintance of the Hangman, that ſhould have faſtened your Father to the Gallows, and you would ſcorn to kiſs his Bloody Hands. How much more abominable ſhall we be to God and his holy Angels, if we cheriſh and delight to entertain Sin, whereas we ſhould be ſtirred up againſt it with an Holy Zeal, and an earneſt deſire of Revenge? Inſtead of nailing to the Croſs this unmerciful Parricide, and cruſhing to pieces this helliſh Monſter; if we feed and nouriſh it in our Bowels, we ſhall then be guilty of crucifying afreſh the Son of God, and putting him to an open ſhame; guilty of trampling him under Feet, and of eſteeming the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith we were ſanctified, an unholy thing.

32. Conſider ſeriouſly the fearful Effects, that Sin produces in you: have you never been ſenſible of the horrid and cruel Torments of a poor Soul diſturb'd with the ſight of its Crimes? How ſharp and piercing are the Remorſes of a Conſcience awaken'd from a prophane Sleep? 'Tis a pain and an anguiſh that cannot be expreſſed; it cauſes our Head to diſſolve into Water, our Eyes to become a Fountain of Tears; it cauſeth our Blood to be congeal'd, our Skin to become black, our Bones to be crack'd and broken. 'Tis a common ſaying, that the Puniſhment follows the Sin cloſe at the heels; but imagine, that it keeps always its Company, and is a Rack and Torture that never leaves the guilty; for there is no Peace for the Wicked, ſaith my God, *Iſai.* 48.

33. Whereas there is no Satisfaction like to that of a good Chriſtian, who loves his God ſincerely, and Worſhips him in Spirit and in Truth. There is no kind of Delight to be compar'd to that of a regenerate Soul, that Applies himſelf without Hypocriſie to the works of Piety and Holineſs, *Job*, 4. for the quiet of the Soul, and the peace of Conſcience are of more worth than great Treaſures, than Sceptres and Crowns. Therefore the Wiſe *Solomon* tells us, that the Righteous Man's Heart is a continual Feaſt, *Prov.* 15. To perſuade us that there is nothing like to this hidden Manna, to this Spiritual Food, that the World knows not, and to theſe Angelical and Divine Pleaſures, the Holy Apoſtle informs us, that 'tis unſpeakable and glorious Joy, and a Peace of God that paſſeth all Underſtanding, *Phil.* 4.

34. If any Delight or Pleaſure accompanies Vice, 'tis but in appearance ſuperficial, as a dream it vaniſheth away; for the Triumph of the Wicked is of a ſhort continuance, and the Joy of the Hypocrite is but for a moment. There is always ſome Thorn, ſome Grief hidden, and ſecret in their laughter, their Heart is afflicted, and their Joy is cut off by Sorrow, *Prov.* 14.

35. But the Holy Joys and Celeſtial Delights of one that fears God, and that worſhips him in Purity and Innocency

Innocency of Life, are ſolid and laſting; they caſt a deep Root in the very bottom of our Hearts, and enter into the Joints and Marrow, and diſperſe themſelves all over the Inward Parts. The Gibbets, the Wheels, and the moſt grievous Torments of this Life, cannot pluck theſe Joys from us, but they comfort the Soul in the midſt of the greateſt Diſtreſſes, and heal up the broken Bones.

'Tis the French Cuſtom to break notable Offender upon a Cart-wh.

36. The Worldlings become weary, tired with the Accompliſhment of their Luſts, and are afflicted at their greateſt Succeſs. They loath at laſt, all their carnal ſports, and their greateſt ſweetneſs turns into bitterneſs; we grow out of taſte with the Pleaſures of Sin, ſo that we begin at laſt to abhor them. 'Tis what *Zophar* intends to ſhew us, when ſpeaking of the Wicked, he ſaith, *His Meat in his Bowels is turned, it is the Gall of Aſps within him, he hath ſwallowed down Riches, and he ſhall vomit them up again: God ſhall caſt them out of his Belly*, Job 20.

37. 'Tis otherwiſe with them, who apply their hearts to the Fear and Service of God, and that find his Yoak eaſy and his Burden light, *Mat.* 11. They take great ſatisfaction in the Ways of Righteouſneſs, they run with an holy freedom to their happy end, and to the Prize of their ſpiritual Calling. The more they drink of the Waters of *Siloah*, the more they thirſt, their Zeal is like an holy Fire, that never ſaith 'tis enough, *Prov.* 10. As the Prophet *Moſes*, after he had been forty Days and forty Nights converſing with God in his holy Mountain, came down with a glorious Countenance, ſhining as bright as the Light, with two Tables of the Law in his hands: Likewiſe a Chriſtian Soul that hath been lifted up to God by frequent Prayers, and been converſing with him in devout Meditation, cannot hide its ſpiritual Joys, and its unſpeakable Delights, it burns with an earneſt Deſire of glorifying God, and of pleaſing him in all things. When the Apoſtle St. *Peter* ſaw our Saviour transfigured upon Mount *Taber*, he was raviſh'd

raviſh'd and tranſported in ſuch a manner, that he cried out, *Lord, 'tis good for us to dwell here, let us make three Tabernacles:* Thus the good Chriſtian, who is enlightned from above, is never weary in the Company of God; if he ſhould live ſeveral Ages, he would not believe that he had too much Time to ſerve his Creator, to worſhip his Divine Majeſty, and to refreſh himſelf with the unſpeakable Pleaſures of his Preſence. As the time of *Jacob*'s Service ſeemed to him but a few Days, becauſe of the Love that he had for *Rachel*: Thus the Days that we ſpend in the Service of God, ſeem to be but a few hours or moments, in caſe our Love for God be earneſt and ſincere.

38. Repreſent to your ſelves the fearful Curſe denounced againſt the Wicked and Prophane, *Gen.* 29. They carry about them every where the Marks of God's Anger and juſt Revenge, they are the Objects of his Hatred, and odious to the Publick: they who flatter and fawn upon them moſt for their own Advantage, abominate and curſe them in the bottom of their Hearts; and they who out of a ſervil Fear, ſeem to honour and worſhip them in the light of the Sun, would be many times very joyful to dance upon their Graves, and to erect a Gallows to hang them thereon.

39. 'Tis not ſo with good Men, they are honoured by God and Man, and their greateſt Enemies admire their Virtues. Let us be never ſo poor and contemptible in the World, we are rich and noble enough, if we fear God as we ought, and obey his Holy Will; for the Fear of the Lord is our chief Treaſure, 'tis our Crown, our Diadem, and our greateſt Ornament.

40. The Wicked Man is frighted and troubled of his own accord, he trembles in the midſt of his Guards, and flies when no Man purſues; all things ſcare him, he is jealous, and diſtruſts his beſt Friends, his Children are ſuſpected; and in the Embraces of his deareſt Wife, he ſlumbers with an unquiet Spirit.

41. 'Tis otherwiſe with a good Man; he marcheth every where with an Head lifted up, and his Heart rejoyceth

joyceth in a perfect Tranquillity of Mind. For there is no Bulwark like that of a good Conſcience; 'tis like a Wall of Braſs, that abides and withſtands the Batteries of Times and Seaſons. He that Fears God is free from all other fears, *Pſal.* 125. The finger of God, that hath ſettled in his Soul, the dread of his Holy Name, baniſhed all other Apprehenſions, *Pſal.* 112. He is like Mount *Sion*, that cannot be moved, he fears no ill Report, his Soul is firmly fixed upon God; in the midſt of his greateſt Dangers, and violent Storms, he ſaith with *David, the Lord is my light, and my deliverance, of whom ſhould I be afraid? The Lord is the Strength of my Life, whom then ſhould I fear? O God, thou art a buckler round about me, my glory, and the lifter up of my Head; I have laid my ſelf down, I have ſlept, and I have awak'd, for the Lord upholds me; I will not fear thouſands of People when they ſhall ſet themſelves round about againſt me, when a whole Army ſhall camp againſt me, my Heart would never fear,* Pſal. 17.

42. Let the Wicked be never ſo great and Honourable, and never ſo highly advanc'd in the World, their Fame ſhall periſh eternally. 'Tis to no purpoſe that they rear up ſtately Trophies, and fill whole Volumes with the remarkable Paſſages of their Lives, making the Marbles to publiſh their Praiſes, for whatſoever they do, and to render their Glory Eternal; their Name ſhall be always abominable to God and all his Holy Angels; and Mankind ſhall never remember it, but with Curſes and Deteſtation. Theſe infamous Perſons are like a ſtinking Lamp, that gives light for a time, but when 'tis put out it yields a moſt odious ſtink. They may be alſo compared to certain Devils, that never go out of a place, without leaving an ill Scent behind them.

43. 'Tis not ſo with good Men; their Fame ſhall flouriſh for ever; and like the Palm, the more Men preſs it down, the more it riſes. Their Names are engraven in the higheſt Heaven, in the glorious Temple of Eternity, and it ſhall always be bleſſed by God and the Angels of his Glory. The Example of their Chriſtian Vertues

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ſhall remain after them, for a Model to their Poſterity, to imitate. A faithful Chriſtian, whoſe Soul is ſanctified by the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, is like the Alablaſter-box of Ointment, which when it was broken, and ſpilt upon our Saviour's Head, 'twas a precious Liquor that perfum'd all the Room. For ſuch an one lives after his Death; when his Body is broken, and reduc'd to Aſhes, his good Name ſpreads abroad, to the Glory of God, and the Edification of his Church. *Mary Magdalen*'s Perfume filled only the Chamber where they were ſitting, and was ſoon ſpent; but the ſweet Perfume of an innocent and holy Life, fills both Heaven and Earth with a grateful Scent, and continues for ever and ever.

44. I judge that another Powerful means to withdraw us from Vice, and to induce us to Virtue, is to repreſent to our ſelves at every moment, the Excellency and Dignity of our Calling, to take a Delight in beholding with the ſpiritual Eyes the white Stone, where our new Name is written, which none knows, but he who receives it. 'Tis the noble and high Quality of the Children of God, and of Believers, which he beſtows upon none, but upon ſuch whom he hath elected from all Eternity. for the eternal Enjoyment of Bliſs in his glorious Kingdom. 'Tis reported of a certain young Prince, that when he had a deſign to diſgrace himſelf by luſtful Actions and Debauchery, a wiſe Philoſopher reclam'd him from his wicked purpoſe by telling him, *Remember that thou art a King*'s *Son*. Thus you Chriſtian Souls, when Satan, the Fleſh, and the World ſhall tempt you to filthy and unjuſt Actions, or to any other Sin, call to your mind, that you are the Children of the King of Kings. Take heed you defile not ſuch a precious Crown; and as our Saviour ſaid to him who ſhould have followed him, but was deſirous firſt to go and bury his Father, *Suffer the dead to bury the dead*; likewiſe we ſay unto you, devout Souls, who have freely conſecrated your ſelves unto God, to his Service and Worſhip; caſt away

away theſe vain and baſe Actions, and all theſe dead Works, leave them to ſuch as are dead in their Treſpaſſes and Sins. But for you, behave your ſelves according to your Celeſtial Calling, apply your ſelves to Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, and to the Practice of all other Vertues, as ſuch who were dead, but now are riſen to Life.

45. We muſt continually meditate upon the Holineſs and Purity of our future Abode in Heaven, and the Expectation that we have there, *Rom* 6. For as Jeſus Chriſt is gone to prepare a Place for us, in the Houſe of his Heavenly Father, *Joh.* 14. 'tis but juſt and reaſonable that we ſhould fit and prepare our Souls for ſuch holy and glorious Manſions, *Rev.* 21. 'Tis not poſſible to go to Heaven by treading in the Paths of Hell. Nothing impure nor filthy ſhall enter into the Holy City, the new *Jeruſalem.* As in *Solomon*'s Temple there was no way to the Holy of Holies, but through the Sanctuary: Thus if we will one day enter into the Heavenly Sanctuary, where Chriſt dwells, the true Ark of the Covenant, and the Mercy-ſeat, *Eph.* 2. 'Tis abſolutely neceſſary, that we ſhould tread in the Paths of good Works, which God hath prepar'd, that we ſhould walk in them, *Tit.* 2. 'Tis upon this Conſideration that St. *Paul* grounds the Exhortation to Piety and Chriſtian Vertues, *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs, and Worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent World, looking for that bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of works; ſeeing that we have ſuch Promiſes, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filth of the Fleſh and Spirit, finiſhing our Sanctification in the fear of God,* 1 Cor. 7. St. *John* makes uſe of the ſame Reaſon, to perſuade us to Holineſs. *Beloved, we are now the Children of God, but what we ſhall be, doth not yet appear; now we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall*

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ſee him as he is, and whoſoever hath this hope in him, let him puriſie him as he is pure, 1 John 2. The Apoſtle St. *Peter* employs the ſame Conſideration to kindle in our Hearts this pure and Celeſtial Fire, *We according to his Promiſe look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs; Wherefore beloved, ſeeing that ye look for ſuch things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without ſpot and blameleſs*, 2 Pot. 3.

46. You know, Chriſtians, that God created our firſt Parents after his own Image and Likeneſs, before he brought them into his own terreſtrial Paradiſe. There is a great Reaſon, that this divine Image ſhould be re-printed in our Souls, before we enter into the Celeſtial Paradiſe. Unto this the Apoſtle hath a Regard when he tells the *Epheſians*, *Be ye renewed in the Spirit of your Mind, and put on the new Man, created according to God in Righteouſneſs and Holineſs*, Chap. 4.

47. If the Place of our future Abode, unto which we are deſigned, requires from us Sanctification, the quality of the Perſons, with whom we ſhall ſpend an Eternity, doth no leſs oblige to the ſame Behaviour; for they ſhall be Angels of Light, and the bleſſed Saints, who have waſhed and whitened their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb, *Rev.* 5. 'Tis a glorious Church that hath neither Spot nor Wrinkle, nor any ſuch thing, *Eph.* 5. 'Tis the Spouſe of the Son of God, cloathed in fine Linnen, clean and white, which are the Righteouſneſs of Saints, *Rev.* 19. St. *Paul* had this ſame Conſideration, when he ſaith, *That we are fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the houſhold of God*, and, *That our Converſation ought to be as becometh Citizens of Heaven*. To wean us from the filthy Deeds of the Fleſh, and from the prophane Diſpoſition of *Eſau*, he employs the ſame Reaſon to perſuade us, in the 12th of the *Heb.* *You are come*, ſaith he, *to mount Sion, to the City of the Living God, the Celeſtial Jeruſalem, to the thouſands of Angels, and to the Aſſembly and Church of the firſt born, who are written in Heaven, and to the Spirits of Juſt Men made perfect.*

48. As

48. As a Child in his Mother's Womb, begins to live there the ſame Life, that it leads when 'tis come into the World; ſo likewiſe a Chriſtian ought to begin to live in the ſame manner upon Earth as he hopes to live for ever in Heaven. If we will live and reign with Chriſt above in his Kingdom, we muſt at preſent have him live and reign in our Hearts here below by Faith.

4. The chief happineſs of Man conſiſts not only in the true Knowledge of God, and of him whom he hath ſent to ſave us, or in the Spiritual Peace, or Celeſtial Tranſports of the Holy Spirit; but it conſiſts in Holineſs, without which none ſhall ſee God, *Job* 17. *Rom.* 5. Therefore the Apoſtle enquires of the *Romans* of his time, *What fruit had you in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed, but now being free from Sin, and become Servants of God, ye have your fruit unto Holineſs, and the end Everlaſting Life*, Heb. 12. Rom. 9.

50. I find alſo, that this is a very good Remedy to keep your ſelves free from the Debaucheries and Corruptions of the Age; to abſtain from the Company and Acquaintance of Vicious Perſons: for as he who touched things unclean, became thereby unclean; and as ſuch as haunt amongſt the Sick of a Plague, are infected with their Diſeaſe; likewiſe 'tis the Property of evil Company to corrupt the beſt Manners, 2 *Cor.* 15.

51. Whereas we ſhould earneſtly covet the Acquaintance of good Men, and delight in the Society of ſuch, who are like the Seraphims, excite and enflame one another to glorify God, and ſing forth his Praiſes; we muſt frequent ſuch whom we deſire to reſemble. For as *Jacob*'s Sheep brought forth Lambs, ſpotted and marked, as the Rod upon which they caſt their Eyes; thus if we have our Joys fixed upon the Holy Examples of Piety and Vertue, we ſhall ſee our ſelves inſenſibly transformed into their Image and Reſemblance. We ought to take pleaſure in their Company with whom we hope to live for ever in the higheſt Heavens.

52. The

52. The most powerful and most effectual Motives to oblige us to the Practice of Piety, of Holiness, and Purity of Life, is to look with the Eye of Faith upon him who is invisible, and to represent to our selves the great World as a large Temple, where he dwells. Let the Voice that *Moses* heard out of the Burning Bush, sound continually in our Ears, and in our Mind, *Put off the shooes from thy Feet, for the place where thou standest is Holy Ground*, Exod. 3. Cast off there thy base and earthly Affections, and renounce thy sottish and filthy Lusts; for thou art always before my Eyes, that are too clean and pure to suffer the sight of evil, and the place where thou standest is sanctified by my Presence, *Heb.* 1. Remember that I see thine Heart, that I search thy Reins, and that I read thy most secret Thoughts, *Revel.* 2. Christian Souls, imagine that God calls unto you from Heaven continually, as he did unto *Abraham*, *Walk before me, and be perfect*, Gen. 17. Let therefore the dread of this Divine Majesty seize upon thee, and possess thee. When *Potiphar*'s Wife tempted chast *Joseph* to defile himself with Adultery, she perceived nothing in the Room but this Object of her Lust; but this Holy Man saw the Glorious Godhead between him and this lascivious Woman. He perceived God's Eye, that penetrates into the greatest Depths. This drew from him this Expression, *How can I do this wickedness, and Sin against God?* Thus if our Flesh tempt us, and if the Vicious and Prophane entice us into secret and shameful Retreats, to share in their filthy Crimes: Let us then remember, that God is every where, and whersoever we hide our selves, God hath an Ear to hear us, an Eye to see us, and an Hand to record all our Deeds, Words, and Thoughts. God is all Ear, all Eye, and all Hand. He discovers us as easily under the dark Shadows of the Night, as at break of Day. He spies us through our Fig-leaves, and beholds us under our most subtle Disguises. He understands our most inward Thoughts, and listens to the silent Language of our Hearts. He searcheth into all

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the Cloſets of our Souls, and into the Foldings and Windings in our Conſciences. In a Word, all things are naked and open to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do. An Ancient Philoſopher perſuaded ſuch as deſired to be Vertuous, to chuſe ſome Grave and Vertuous Perſon for their Example to repreſent him always in their preſence, and to live as in his ſight, *Seneca*. We need not repreſent to our ſelves imaginary Appearances; for in every Place where we are, and whatever we do or think, we are always in the Sight of the Holy of Holies, who is both our Witneſs and our Judge. It was *David*'s Meditation when he cried out, *O Lord, whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither ſhall I go from thy Preſence? If I mount up to Heaven thou art there, if I go down into the Pit thou art there alſo; if I take the Wings of the Morning and fly to the uttermoſt part of the Sea, thither ſhall thine Hand guide me, and thy right hand uphold me. If I ſay, the Darkneſs ſhall cover me, behold, the Night ſhall be like light round about me, darkneſs ſhall not hinder me from thee, and the Night ſhall ſhine as the Day, the Night and the Day are to thee alike.*

53 If the Devil and the World have enſnar'd us in their Nets, and if we have been unhappily lull'd aſleep in the Boſom of ſome deceitful Pleaſure: This Conſideration alone, that God ſees and underſtands us, is able to awake us with an holy Dread and Fear. Let therefore the Words of St. *Paul* ſound continually in our Minds, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall enlighten thee*; or, *awake to Righteouſneſs and Sin not*, Eph. 5. 1 Cor. 15. Truly, if we be not ſtupified and beſotted above meaſure, this dreadful Voice that God thunders from Heaven, is able not only to awake us from the ſleep of Iniquity; but to oblige alſo us cry out with *Jacob*, *God is here, and I knew it not! O how dreadful is this place! 'tis the Houſe of God; 'tis the Gate of Heaven*, 28. As ſoon as *Peter* had taken notice of our Saviour's Looks, that were caſt upon him, he went out of the High Prieſt's Hall, and wept

bitterly for his Apoſtacy. Thus, if we could but perceive and acknowledge, that God caſts his Eye continually upon us, we ſhould repent of our Vices, and our Hearts would quickly melt into Tears of Contrition.

54. They, who have a powerful and malicious Enemy to watch over them, and to catch at ſomething to accuſe them before the Judge, that they may be condemned, are always upon their Guard, and nothing is able to induce them to utter a Word, or commit an Action that may give an Advantage. No Enemy is more powerful and malicious than Satan, who continually Eyes us, that he might accuſe us before God and draw us into Hell. For that reaſon he is named, *Revel.* 12. *The Accuſer of the Brethren, who accuſeth them before God day and night.* 'Tis probable he Regiſters all our Idle Words and wicked Deeds to produce them before God's Throne when the Books ſhall be open'd, and he ſhall render unto every one according to his Works. Take heed therefore, Chriſtians, of the dreadful Accuſer, of this mortal Enemy of your Salvation. Give him not cauſe to rejoyce at your ruin, or to triumph at the loſs of your Souls. To this the Apoſtle exhorts us, *Eph.* 4. *Give no place to the Devil.*

55 And becauſe 'tis ſometimes neceſſary to reſtrain our ſelves with an holy Awe, and to withdraw our ſelves out of Luſt, out of the Fire; you Religious Souls, keep always in your Mind a ſhort Account of the Judgments of God, that have been inflicted from time to time, upon all manner of Sinners. Conſider how God dealt with the Heavenly Spirits, who have not kept their Original Purity, they are reſerved for utter Darkneſs, and for eternal Chains, until the great Day of Judgment; and ſay unto your ſelves, if God hath not ſpared the Apoſtate Angels, will he ſpare Man that rebels againſt him, and offends him with delight? Remember the dreadful fall of our firſt Parents, who although they had been faſhion'd with God's own Hand, and inſtructed by him, have loſt both themſelves

ſelves and their Poſterity, by liſtening to the deceitful ſuggeſtions of the old Serpent. Caſt your Thoughts upon the firſt wicked World that was deſtroyed by a Deluge, and upon the Cities of *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*, upon whom fell the Fire and Brimſtone of God's hot Diſpleaſure. Look upon *Pharaoh*, and the *Egyptians* overwhelmed with all their Pride, in the Waves of the *Red-Sea*. Conſider the three thouſand that were kill'd with the *Levites* ſwords becauſe of the Idolatry of the Golden Calf; and the four and twenty thouſand, whom a ſudden Death ſwept away, becauſe they went a Whoring after *Baal-Peor*. Look with fear upon the burning Serpents of the Wilderneſs, that caſt their Poiſon upon the Murmurers againſt God, and their Superiors; upon the Earth that open'd its Mouth to ſwallow *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; upon thoſe Heavenly Flames that conſum'd *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who offered ſtrange Fire unto the Lord; upon the Bears that went out of the Foreſt to devour two and forty young Raſcals who mock'd *Eliſha*; upon the Lyon that devour'd the Prophet, who diſobey'd God's Command, and harkened to a lying Brother. In ſhort, caſt your Eyes with aſtoniſhment upon *Nebuchadnezzar*, feeding among the Beaſts of the Field, *Jezabel* eaten up by Dogs, *Herod* conſumed with Worms, and the rich Miſer burning in the Flames of Hell, *Dan.* 4. 2 *Kings* 9. *Acts* 12. *Luke* 16.

56. Above all things, think upon the laſt Judgment; and conſider this laſt Day, in which we muſt all appear before the Judgment ſeat of Chriſt, to receive in our Bodies that which we ſhall have done, whether it be good or Evil. Remember that in this dreadful day God will bring to light the hidden things of Darkneſs, the ſecret Contrivances and Thoughts of the Heart. Before this Throne of Fire, the Books ſhall be opened; not only God's Books, where all our Sins and Impieties are regiſtred, but alſo the Books of our Conſciences, where the frightful Image of all our Crimes ſhall appear. In the Day of this Glorious Coming, the Heavens

ſhall melt, the Elements ſhall be diſſolved, the Earth and all its Works ſhall be burnt with Fire, and every Man ſhall give an account of every Idle Word, how much more of every wicked Action, and prophane Diſcourſe. *Matt.* 5. 12.

57. That we may not be confounded, nor aſham'd in this diſmal Day, in which God will Judge the World by the Man whom he had ordained; let us be inwardly perſwaded, that 'tis not ſufficient to abſtain from outward Sins, but we muſt alſo hate, and inwardly abhor them, *Acts* 17. For as the Leopard in Chains leaves not his Skin nor his Spots, and changes not for all his Reſtraint his rapacious and cruel Nature, for he continues ſtill a Leopard; and as a Thief in Fetters ſhut in a Dungeon, remains a Thief in his Heart; likewiſe ſuch as abſtain from exterior Sins only for fear of Man, and the Severity of the Laws, are nevertheleſs eſteem'd vicious and abominable in the ſight of God, and of his Holy Angels; if every time that he thinks upon his Crimes, he is not moved with a true Contrition, and abhors them not with all his Heart. The beſt means to render our Conſcience whole, is to tear it in pieces with the Sorrows of Repentance.

58. 'Tis not ſufficient to abſtain from Thoughts, Words and Actions, that God prohibits, but we muſt alſo apply our ſelves to the ſtudy of true Piety, of Vertue, and generally of all the good Works that God requires. For as the Praiſe and Honour of a good Bowman is never beſtow'd upon one who hath only the skill of not Breaking his Bow, his Arrows and his Quiver: but to him who ſtrikes the Mark, and Aims well. And he is not able to become a good Artiſt, who works not ill, becauſe he doth nothing at all; but he who Works well and ſhews excellent Pieces of Workmanſhip: likewiſe he is not to paſs for a good and religious Chriſtian, who only abſtains from Evil, and commits no outward Sins, but he that doth Good, and applies himſelf to Vertue. Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit,

Fruit, although it bears no evil Fruit, is hewen down and caſt into the Fire, *Mat.* 2. Our Saviour curs'd the Fig-tree, not becauſe it brought forth evil Fruits, but becauſe it brought forth no good Fruit, but was altogether barren. The wicked Servant was caſt out into utter Darkneſs, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth, not becauſe he had loſt, or miſpent his Talent, but becauſe he had not employ'd it well, and turned it to his Lords Advantage, *Mat.* 25. Not only ſuch ſhall be condemned to the Flames, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, who afflict God's Children on Earth and ſpill the Blood of his Servants; but ſuch as have not cloathed his Members, viſited and comforted them, nor given them to eat and drink. In ſhort, if you enquire from the rich Miſer, how he comes to be condemn'd to Hell, or tortur'd in the Flames, he will not tell you it was becauſe he took what was not his own, or becauſe he committed Murders, Violencies and other horrid Deeds, but becauſe he lived without Charity, and had not Pity of the Poor.

58. And as God requires that we ſhould proceed daily forward, until we come to the meaſure of the perfect Stature in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we muſt very frequently take a view of our former Life, and feel the Pulſe of our Luſts, to ſee whether they be not more fervent and violent than before, whether the Old Man continues to decline, and how much we have gain'd upon our wicked Affections, and reformed our corrupt Diſpoſition. For as thoſe who ſwim againſt the Stream, if they ſlack but a little, are carried downwards by the violence of the Current. Likewiſe if we employ not all our Strength to ſwim up to our Heavenly Source, Integrity, and Perfection, the Torrent of our Luſts, and of evil Cuſtoms, will force us down into the deep Abyſs of Death, and eternal Deſtruction. We muſt therefore often examine every Day, what Progreſs we have made in Piety and Holineſs; and whether ſince ſo many Years, that God ſpeaks to us, and inſtructs us to diſcover what is pleaſing to him,

if we have more Piety, Zeal and Charity, and more Holineſs than before. We muſt imitate the ſollicitous care of ſuch as have tranſplanted ſome rare Plant of the *Eaſt*, in this *Northern* Climate; they have always their Eye upon it, to take notice of every thing that happens to it. We muſt propoſe for our Example a Steward having a great Account to make up, who looks often upon his Memorials and Regiſters. An Heathen Philoſopher was highly prais'd, becauſe he never laid himſelf down to ſleep, until he had well examin'd what Progreſs he had made in Philoſophy, and Moral Vertue: Likewiſe a good Chriſtian ſhould never caſt himſelf upon his Bed to ſleep a Night, until he hath ſeriouſly conſidered how he hath proceeded forward in Piety and the Love of God. In a word, a true Chriſtian by this means ſhall never be leſs alone, than when he is alone. For then he ſhall entertain himſelf with his God, and ſhall diſcover unto him his Heart, and his moſt ſecret Thoughts. Then he ſhall ſpeak ſeriouſly unto his Soul, and ſhall examine exactly his Conſcience. Then he will look to his wicked Deeds, to weep and lament for them with Tears of ſincere Repentance. Then he will caſt himſelf upon the infinite Mercy and Goodneſs of his God, to embrace it with a lively Faith and Aſſurance. Then he will make a reflection upon God's Commands, to walk in them with an Holy Zeal and Earneſtneſs all the Days of his Life.

60. Amongſt theſe Directions that I intend to give to him that deſires to apply himſelf to the Practice of Piety, and to abandon Vice; I muſt not forget this Advice, that he muſt never ſatisfie his carnal Luſts and Pleaſures, but he ſhould rather check and bridle them. For when we grant them what they crave, we are ſo far from extinguiſhing the feveriſh Flames, and ſatisfying theſe Helliſh Longings, that we do but increaſe and encourage them the more. As he that loves Money, is not ſatisfied with Money, and as the Ambitious is never exalted high enough in Honour; Thus the luſtful Worldling is never contented with the fulleſt Enjoyment

ment of carnal Pleaſures. 'Tis a Fire that kindles another, and a Flame that never ſaith, *'Tis enough.* Theſe filthy Luſts are like the Serpent that ſtings the Boſom of the Perſon that warms it in his Breaſt; or as the Furnace of *Babylon*, that burnt up thoſe who firſt kindled it. So ſuch as entertain the Flames of their fleſhly Luſts, keep in their Boſoms a Fire that will at laſt burn and totally conſume them.

61. We muſt reſiſt the firſt Motions of the Fleſh, with the Shield of Faith, extinguiſh the firſt enflamed Darts of the Devil. For 'tis very eaſy to put out the firſt Sparkle of an encreaſing Fire; but if we neglect or cheriſh it, it may come to be a fearful Burning: And as we can without pain pluck up with one Hand a young Tree planted but a few Days; but if we ſuffer it to take Root, and to get Strength, we ſhall not be able to pull it up with both Hands, but muſt be forced to imploy the Axe, the Wedge, and the Saw: Likewiſe if we reſiſt Sin in its beginning, we ſhall eaſily overcome and tame it; we ſhall extinguiſh without difficulty theſe firſt beginnings of a ſtrange Fire, and we ſhall pluck up with eaſe this bitter Plant, that will grow up to our Sorrow. But if we ſuffer this infernal Fire of Luſt to encreaſe, all the Water of the Sea will not be able to extinguiſh it. And if we give leave to this curſed Plant to grow, it will never be pluck'd up without much ſweat and labour. Sin never begins as it ends, and diſcovers not all its Poiſon at once. As the Child in his Mother's Womb is not made in an inſtant; Thus this Monſter of Satan is form'd by degrees, one Chain of Hell is linked into another. When Luſt hath conceived, it brings forth Sin. From the Thoughts proceed the Suggeſtion, and from the Suggeſtion, Pleaſure and Delight, and from Delight, Conſent, and after Conſent, then follows the Deed, which begets the Habit. From thence the Sinner proceeds to be hardened in a Cuſtom of Sin. Thus the Devil aggravates his Tyrannical Yoak, and ſtrengthens the Chains, by which he drags us into Eternal Damnation.

62. As amongſt the Planets, there is always one that rules and cauſeth his Influences to be felt upon Earth more than the reſt; thus among Sins and Luſts, there is always ſome one or other that ſways in us, unto which we are more addicted than to the reſt, this therefore we muſt chiefly take heed of. Here we ought to diſcover our Strength and Induſtry, for fear that the Devil ſhould employ it as a means to enter into our Souls, and eſtabliſh there his Tyranny. We muſt imitate the wiſe valiant Captains, who having a place to defend againſt a vigilant and an active Enemy, fortifie the places that are naturally the weakeſt, and furniſh them with the beſt Soldiers, cauſing there a watchful and continual Guard to be kept. Chriſtian Souls, be ſure you take all the Armour of God, that you may be able to reſiſt in the evil Day, and having overcome all, that ye may continue ſtedfaſt, *Eph.* 6.

63. We ought not to neglect any Sin, nor imagine that there are ſome light and inconſiderable ones, that God regards not. For a little Leaven ſeaſons and leavens the whole Lump, and the leaſt dead Fly corrupts and cauſeth ſeveral Confections to bubble up and ſpoil. The leaſt Scratch may cauſe a feveriſh Inflammation, and but a little Poyſon can lay us in our Graves. The Devil cares not by what Gate he enters into our Souls, and by what tye he takes hold of our Hearts. Thus the curſed Serpent ſlides thro' the leaſt and narroweſt cranies and holes of the Houſe, as well as through the wideſt Gates. Chriſtian Souls, give no place to the Devil, but ſhut your Ears to all his Enchantments.

64. We muſt not always eſchew all manner of Sins, and abſtain from all appearance of Evil; but for our better ſecurity, that we may not endanger our Salvation, we muſt take heed of all thoſe things whereof our Souls are doubtful, and upon which our Conſciences cannot be ſatisfied. We muſt never do any thing, but we ought firſt to be fully perſwaded that 'tis acceptable to God, and agreeable with his Holy Will; for *whatſoever is done without Faith, is Sin.*

65. As

65. As they who intend to ſtop the Current of a running Water, are wont to cut for it a new Channel; thus if your vicious Luſts and Paſſions are too violent, you muſt divert them, and propoſe to your ſelves new and freſh Objects. Are you Cholerick? Be angry and Sin not; fret and fume againſt your own Sins and Luſts, and cruſh in pieces theſe Children of *Babel*. Are you oppreſt with Sadneſs and Grief? Let the cauſes of your Sadneſs be your Offences againſt God, and the Scandals of his Church. Are you furious and violent? Remember to be of the number of thoſe bleſſed Perſons, who take the Kingdom of God by violence. Are you inclined to Covetouſneſs? Covet and be greedy of the Riches and Treaſures of Heaven, *Matth.* 21. Are you lifted up with Ambitious Thoughts? Let your Ambitious Aim be to raiſe you upon the Immortal Throne, and to attain to the Incorruptible Crown of Glory. Are you Luſtful, and given to your Pleaſures? Labour to enjoy the Divine and Raviſhing Delights of the Holy Spirit, and meditate often upon the eternal Pleaſures that are reſerved for you in Heaven.

66. Devout Souls, who ſigh and groan for your Infirmities, who labour to attain to Perfection, apply your ſelves to read and meditate upon God's Holy Word, with a Religious Attention; and before you enter into this Holy Lecture, ſay with the Prophet *David, Lord open mine Eyes, and I ſhall ſee the Wonders of thy Law*, Pſal. 119. Intreat your good God to open your Hearts, as he did *Lydia*'s, to receive this incorruptible Seed of your Regeneration, and that he may give you a filial Obedience, *Acts* 16. In ſuch a caſe, as ſoon as you ſhall hear the Lord's Voice, you will find your Soul enflamed with his Holy Love, 1 *Pet.* 1. When we only behold a beautiful Countenance, we become not more beautiful thereby; nor do we take from it its excellent Features, 2 *Cor.* 3. but 'tis otherwiſe with us, who behold as in a Glaſs openly, the Glory of the Lord;

Lord; we are transformed thereby into the same Image of his Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

67. Take pleasure to meditate often upon God's wonderful Works, and to sing forth his Praises. The spiritual Songs inspired by the Holy Ghost, commonly appease all the evil Notions of our Mind, and beget in us an holy Joy, and Celestial Peace. As when *Saul* was tormented with a wicked Spirit, *David* was appointed with his Harp to play before him, and by that means quieted his troubled Mind. Likewise when Hatred, Anger, Revenge, Covetousness, Ambition or Lust, or any other of unruly Passions, which are as so many evil Spirits that disturb and torture our Souls within us; we must seek a Remedy from *David*'s Harp, and sing unto the Lord in spiritual Songs and Hymns.

68. We ought carefully to attend at the publick Exercises of Devotion, and not leave off the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is. For where there are but two or three met together, in the Name of Jesus Christ, he is there in the midst of them. St. *Thomas*, who was not with the Apostles when Christ first appeared amongst them, lost the Comfort then of seeing him risen from the dead. And if this merciful Redeemer had not had Compassion of him, he had perish'd in his Unbelief for ever. If upon the day of Pentecost, any of the Faithful had been found absent from the Holy Company in the Faithful in *Jerusalem*, they had not seen the glorious Appearance of the Holy Ghost. Who knows but in a Sermon that we have neglected, we have lost some Pious Advice, some seasonable Exhortation, by which God might have brought our Hearts to Repentance? Who knows, but instead of the Fire that devours us, we might have felt the holy Flames kindled in us, like unto those Flames of the burning Bush, that would burn in us and not consume us? Who knows but at the breaking up of the Assembly, we might have said as the two Disciples of Christ going to *Emaus*, *Did not our Hearts burn within us when he spake to us, and opened the Scriptures?*

69. We

69. We muſt be fervent, zealous, and perſevering in Prayers and other Holy Duties, and embrace our Lord and Saviour with the Arms of Faith and Repentance, and ſay unto him as *Jacob, I ſhall not leave thee, until thou haſt bleſſed me.* Chiefly, we ought to apply our ſelves to theſe holy Exerciſes, when we feel the inward and troubleſome ſtrugglings of the Fleſh againſt the Spirit. We ſhould imitate the Vertuous Woman, who feeling two Children ſtirring in her Womb, fell to her Prayers, and unburdened her Sorrows in the Boſom of our Heavenly Father. And as St *Peter*, when he began to ſink, lifted up his Hands and Voice, *Lord, ſave me*, Matth, 14. Likewiſe we who walk upon this dangerous Sea of the World, as ſoon as we feel our ſelves ſinking into Carnal Delights, or as ſoon as the Waves of vicious Examples, and dangerous Cuſtoms overpower us; let us cry out from the bottom of our Hearts, O merciful God, ſtretch out thine Hand from above, and deliver me from theſe Waters of Hell that carry me away; accompliſh thy Vertue in Mine Infirmities, and give me Grace in reſiſting againſt Sin, to reſiſt unto Blood, *Pſal.* 69. *Heb.* 5. Let thine Holy Spirit overcome mine; let Heaven command the Earth, and let Paradiſe lead Hell in Triumph. If we make this Petition with all our Hearts, God will grant it from his Holy Sanctuary. He will extinguiſh the Fire that burns us. He will ſhut the Lions Mouth that is ready to devour us. He will appeaſe the Winds and Storms that the Devils have raiſed in us, and at his firſt entrance into our Ship, toſt up and down with Fears and Apprehenſions, he will bring Peace and a bleſſed Tranquillity, and will lead us to the ſafe Haven of eternal Happineſs. As *Moſes*, when he had been familiar with God, came down from the Mountain with a ſhining Countenance; and as our Saviour, when he was in Prayer upon Mount *Tabor*, was transfigured, his Garments were white as the Light, and his Face appeared as glorious as the Sun; likewiſe if we lift up our ſelves above all

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theſe Earthly and corruptible Things, and pray to God with an holy Earneſtneſs and Zeal, we ſhall ſee that our Souls ſhall be thereby cloathed with Holineſs, and full of Glory and Light. They will be transformed into the bleſſed Image of the great God, whom we adore; for as ſoon as we behold him we ſhall become enlightned.

70. To the end we may tame this Body, and that we may reduce it to Obedience, and overcome all our wicked and dangerous Luſts, *Pſal.* 69. 34. 'Tis neceſſary that we ſhould add Faſting to our Prayers. We muſt not always expect a time appointed by the Rulers of our Church upon ſolemn Occaſions, but we muſt preſcribe to our ſelves a Faſt, according as we ſhall ſee it expedient and uſeful. For if this Fleſh be unruly and rebellious againſt God and his Holy Laws; if Eaſe and Plenty encourage his Impurities and Inſolence, let us deprive it of its Food and Dainties; labour to mortifie it by Faſtings and Abſtinence, and remember what our Saviour Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel, *That there are ſome evil Spirits that are not to be driven out, but by Faſting and Prayer*, Mat. 27.

71. If God gives us Grace to overcome Sin, and mortifie our Luſts, by fervent and earneſt Prayers, by auſtere Faſtings, by the bitter Tears of Repentance, and by the Aſſiſtance and Bleſſing of his Divine Spirit upon our Devotions; take heed that we become not careleſs and negligent in good Works. Deceive not your ſelves, Religous Souls, and be not ſurprized. For many times the Old Man looks as if he were dead, that we might not offer to ſtrike him again to the Heart, that he may recover more Strength. There is always in the Aſhes ſomething of that infernal Fire, that is able to do much Miſchief. Luſt is not rooted out ſo entirely, but that there remain ſome ſtrings in our Hearts that may grow again. This ſcource of Iniquity is not ſo dry, but that it may run afreſh. As during the time of Peace, Men prepare new Armour for the War, and exerciſe themſelves at Tilts and Turnaments.

ments. Likewiſe during the Calm and Reſt of our Souls, we muſt prepare ſome Armour for our ſpiritual Warfare. And as 'tis not ſufficient to win a Place by Aſſault, and to drive out the Enemies Forces, but we muſt alſo watch Day and Night, and keep a conſtant and a ſtrong Guard, that we may not be ſurprized and overcome. Thus when we have forced out the Devil, and baniſh'd him out of our Hearts, we muſt be always upon our Guard, and ſtop all the Avenues, for fear that this evil ſpirit ſhould come upon us accompanied him with ſeven worſe Spirits, and that our laſt Condition ſhall be worſe than the firſt.

72. To theſe Works of Piety and Devotion, in which we cannot be always employ'd, we muſt remember to add a lawful Calling; for Idleneſs is the Mother of all Vices. When we are doing nothing, the Devil prompts us to Evil. This befel *David*, a Man after God's own Heart; when he gave himſelf over, contrary to his former Practice, to baſe Idleneſs; whilſt he was looking into his Neighbour's Houſe, the Devil entred into his Heart, and with the Aſſiſtance of a filthy Object, enflam'd his Soul with an unlawful Luſt. As the Iron that is not us'd, becomes ruſty; as the ſtanding Water putrifies, and as the Earth that is not manur'd, begets Inſects and venomous Serpents: Likewiſe a Soul that is not employ'd, is ſoon covered over with the Ruſt of Vice. 'Tis eaſily dragg'd along into the Corruption of the Age, and apt to beget and bring forth Monſters. Therefore the Prophet *Ezekiel* examines the very beginning and firſt ſpring of *Soloman*'s ſin, ſaying, *That it was the Plenty of Bread, Eaſe and Idleneſs*, Ezek. 16. Chriſtians, if you deſire to keep your Souls pure and undefiled, that the Holy Spirit may reign in them, give no Entertainment to the Devil: Let him find you always well employ'd, and let him never ſee you at leiſure, to aſſault you with his Helliſh Temptations. *Eph.* 4.

73. After all, we muſt ſeriouſly think upon Death, and repreſent it always before our Eyes. For as a Pilot

Pilot to govern and ſteer a Ship, ought to be at the Stern, and ſit at the Helm; ſo to govern the courſe of this Life as we ought, we muſt conſider our latter end, live always as if we were ready to die, and to breathe forth the laſt Gaſp: therefore this Sentence is worthy to be engraven upon Cedar in Golden Characters, *Whatever thou ſayeſt, and whatever thou doeſt, remember thy latter end, and thou ſhalt never ſin*, Eccleſ. 7.

Wonder not, Chriſtian Souls, if in this Treatiſe, where I am to furniſh you with Remedies againſt the Fears of Death, I would have Death it ſelf to be a Remedy againſt Sin, for theſe things are united and linked together, or rather they hold one another by the Hand. For as a good and holy Life is a ſafe preparation to an happy Death; likewiſe Death is a ſtrong motive to oblige us to live well. For there is none, unleſs it be a brutiſh and deſperate Varlet, but at the hour of Death laments at the Conſideration of his former wicked Life, and grieves that he hath not applied himſelf to the Fear of God, and to the practice of Chriſtian Vertues. If a Malefactor, after he is condemn'd to dye, and hath heard the ſentence of his Doom, did mind nothing but Drinking and Playing, inſtead of Prayer and Repentance, by which ſuch an one is to diſpoſe himſelf to go to God, every one would wonder at him, as at a Monſter and a Madman. Likewiſe if we conſider as we ought, that Death is certain and unavoidable, that God hath pronounced the ſentence in his Anger, and that none ſhall be excepted; this will be able to recall us from Vice, and to perſwade us to Holineſs, without which none ſhall ſee God, *Heb.* 12. Therefore at every moment, when Satan, the world and our own Fleſh, intice us to any evil Action, let us think within our ſelves, would I have Death find and ſeize upon me in this Employment? Am I in a good Diſpoſition to go thus unto God, and to appear before his Tribunal? Jeſus the Son of *Syrach* had well conſider'd this when he pronounced this excellent ſentence, which I could wiſh were engraven

in

in the Soul of every Chriſtan, *Remember thy latter end, and thou ſhalt not Sin.*

We muſt therefore live in the World without being guilty of its Corruptions and Abominations. As Fiſh preſerves its Sweetneſs in the midſt of the Salt Waves of the Sea; and as Sheep never learn to bark nor bite, tho' Dogs be always with them; Likewiſe tho' our Converſation be in the World amongſt the Prophane and Vicious Men of this Age, we muſt not imitate their filthy Words, their Oaths, nor their Blaſphemies; and leſs Reaſon have we to follow their Wicked and Abominable Deeds; we muſt converſe among them as *Lot* in the City of *Sodom*, as *Joſeph* in *Egypt*, as *Danniel* in *Babylon*. Bleſſed and Holy is he who hath part in the firſt Reſurrection, the Second Death ſhall have no power upon him.

When *Jacob* by God's Command went to *Bethel*, he charg'd his Wives, his Children, and all that were with him, *Put away the ſtrange Gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your Garments, and let us ariſe, and go up to* Bethel, Gen. 33. *And I will make there an Altar unto God, who anſwered me in the Day of my Diſtreſs, and was with me in the way which I went.* Then they deliver'd into *Jacob*'s Hands all the ſtrange God's that were in their Poſſeſſion, and hid them under an Oak in *Sechem*. Thus before you go to the true *Bethel*, to the dwelling where you ſhall eat your fill of the Bread of the Kingdom of Heaven, before you offer unto God the Sacrifice of your Souls, you muſt, if you be true Chriſtians, renounce Sin, and all wicked Luſts, which have been formerly your Idols. I would adviſe you to bury them deep in this baſe Earth. But you had better do as God commands you from Heaven, *Trample under foot all theſe abominable Vices, and all theſe worldly Luſts, that are to you as ſo many falſe Gods that you worſhip*, Ezek. 2, *Put away from before me thoſe Idols of Jealouſie that provoke me to Jealouſie, and ſanctifie the Temple of my Holineſs.* Cleanſe your Hands, ye Sinners, and ſanctify your ſelves ye double minded. Put off the

Old

Old Man with all his Deeds, and put on the New Man created according to the Image of God, in Righteousness and true Holiness, and then you shall be admitted to the Holy Temple of my Glory, to offer unto me amongst the innumerable Companies of Saints, the acceptable Perfumes of Praises and Thanksgivings, *Jam.* 4. *Eph.* 4.

This is a Duty so just and necessary, that natural Reason it self, enlighten'd by Grace, acknowledges it to be so; nay, the most wretched Varlets are constrain'd to give Glory to God, and to condemn themselves they confess that they are indebted to the Divine Majesty, but the Payment of this Debt they put off from Day to Day; and whenever you come to them, they are ready to require a delay; they acknowledge their Faults, the heinousness of their Crimes, and the necessity of Repentance; but they are always putting off Repentance and Reformation of Life. As when a Sluggard is newly awaked out of his Sleep, he desires *yet a little Sleep, a little Slumber, a little folding of the hands to Sleep*, Prov. 24. Thus whenever Death appears, the Voluptuous are yet requesting to enjoy their carnal Delights. When the Lord's Messengers are calling upon us to repair the Breaches that the Devil hath made in our Souls, we could willingly answer as the *Jews* did to the Prophet, *That the Time is not come the Lord's House should be built*, Hag. 1. The young Man in his Youth and Strength is apt to say, that 'tis not yet time to busie himself about Wisdom and Reformation, and that when he comes to be old, he will then repent of the Sins of his Youth. And the old Man endeavours to put off his Repentance until the hour of his Departure. He expects then to make a general Confession of all his Crimes, to satisfy all his Neighbours, and to restore what he possesseth unjustly. In short, all Men generally flatter themselves in their Evil Courses, and most are so extravagant, as to be prevailed, that when they have lived in Sin and Iniquity all their Life, mis spent God's Blessings, abu-

sed

ſed his Mercies; a Tear, or a Sigh at the time of our Death will make a ſufficient amends for all; and that he will be fully ſatisfied, if we ſay then as the Prodigal Child, *My Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and againſt thee:* Or as the good Thief, *Lord, remember me,* Luke 23. 42.

I have much to ſay againſt ſo great a Miſtake, ſo dangerous and prophane Perſuaſion. Firſt, what reaſon have we to believe that God will accept our Repentance, when we cannot endure to accept of his Graces and Redemption; that he will hear our Sighs, and grant our Prayers, when we will by no means give ear to his Voice, nor obey the Commands that he ſends us of repenting?

Wretched Man! doſt thou not ſtay to glorify God till the moment when thy Breath ſhall fail thee? Is it juſt that thou ſhouldeſt then begin to ſerve him, when thou ſhalt be able to ſerve and pleaſe thy Fleſh no longer, nor ſatisfie thy fooliſh Luſts?

This great God who had commanded, during the Shadows and Types of *Moſes*'s Law, that the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould offer unto him their Firſt-born, and the Firſt-fruits of their Inheritances, will he take it well now in this admirable Sun ſhine of the Goſpel, that thou ſhould'ſt offer to the Devil, and to the World, the Firſt-fruits of thy Youth, the Strength of thy Years, and that thou ſhould'ſt reſerve for him only the Dregs and Corruption of a decaying old Age?

'Tis to mock God and Man to dream of living well when our Life is far ſpent and gone. To lift up our Eyes and Thoughts to Heaven, when the Earth fails us under our Feet. To reſtore other Mens Goods, when we can keep them no longer. To renounce all Deſires of Revenge, when we have no Power of Acting. To abſtain from the foul Luſts of the Fleſh, when we are able to continue in them no longer. To abhor Theft, Uſury, Rapine and Extortion, when a Coffin is preparing to receive us, and Death looks us in the Face. Such Perſons cannot be ſaid to leave Sin, but rather Sin

leaves them; as the Ravens leave the Tree that falls down with Age, or that is ſtruck with the Thunder.

By our unreaſonable Delays, Evil and Sin grow older, and the cure becomes every Day more difficult. For the more thou ſhalt be hardned in thy Corruption, and confirmed in thy Sins, the harder it will be for thee to break and melt thy corrupted Heart. The deeper Luſt ſhall have caſt its Roots in thy Soul, the more labour thou ſhalt find in plucking them out. In ſhort, he that gives too much Liberty to his unlawful Affections, makes his Vices, by cuſtom, become natural, and cannot be converted without a great Miracle.

Man's moſt important and difficult Affair in the World, is his Converſion to God. Therefore 'tis a great folly to put it off to ſuch a time, as we ſhall be in the feebleſt and weakeſt Condition; to a time when we ſhall have moſt Buſineſs to do, and moſt Trouble. Doubtleſs he orders not his Affairs well, who puts off his praying to God, and his Thoughts of Heaven, until he comes to be ſtretched on his Death-bed. For then we know not to whom we are firſt to anſwer. An account of our worldly Concerns is then required from us; we are then to make our laſt Will and Teſtament, we call for a Scrivener, and are inwardly vex'd to behold him; the Viſits of Friends trouble us, and their abſence doth much diſpleaſe us: Pain ſeizes upon us; Defluctions are ready to choak us; Fevers burns us and diſturb our Minds; Phyſicians oppreſs us with noiſom Remedies; the Noiſe is a Trouble to us, and Silence is ſuſpected; our Parents and Friends torment us with their officious Dealings; our Children, and our greateſt Darlings melt our Hearts, and their Tears force us to weep. But the worſt is, the Devils are then moſt buſie and active. Theſe Helliſh Fiends, like devouring Ravens, fly about us, endeavouring to fright us. In ſhort, 'tis then the Prince of the Powers of the Air ſtirs up againſt us furious Storms and Tempeſts, to cauſe us to periſh in the very

Haven.

Haven. In the midſt of ſo many Diſturbances, and of ſo many powerful Waves 'tis a difficult task to poſſeſs our Souls in Peace, to think upon our Conſciences, to hear God ſpeaking to us to prepare for Death as we ought, and to keep our ſelves from ſinking, and from being ſwallowed up with its Apprehenſions and Frights.

Old Age hath Infirmities enough, we need not defile it with youthful Sins and Luſts. For many times it cauſeth more Wounds in our Souls, than there are Wrinkles upon our Skin. When the Body decays and grows weak, the Luſts of the Fleſh become ſtronger, and oft-times when it whitens the Face, it ſpots the Conſcience. In a Word, the Bones of Old Age are weak enough and ſufficiently full of Pain, that we need not over-burden them with the Sins committed in the flower and ſtrength of our Age.

Moreover, we know not when, nor how Death will aſſault us, nor what favour we are to expect from it. Who knows but that it intends not to give us the liberty of ſpeaking to our Friends, nor of thinking upon our Conſciences? For it ſends not always a warning to us, as to the good King *Hezekiah*, *Set thine Houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die*, 2 Kings 20. For as we have already taken notice, it ſurpriſeth us in every Age, in every Time and Place, and in the midſt of all manner of Employments. Old *Eli* fell down backward and brake his Neck, when he heard the unhappy News of taking of the Ark, and the Death of his Sons. *Job*'s Children dreamed of nothing but of ſolacing and delighting themſelves in their Feaſts and Jolity, when the Houſe where they were, fell down and buried them in its Ruins. But beſides theſe unhappy Accidents, how many are there whoſe Mouth Death cloſeth on a ſudden, without ſuffering them to ſpeak a word? How many are there in the World, who are thought to be in perfect Health, and yet ſuddenly fall into an Apoplexy, and into other quick Diſeaſes, ſo that they are to be found ſooner dead than thought to be ſick.

Beſides, when we ſhould have a greater Strength, and Vigour, ſo that we might foreſee the time of our Departing drawing near. Repentance is not at our Command, 'tis given us from above, and a ſpecial Favour of the Holy Spirit. God works not Miracles every day, he changeth not at every Moment, Rocks into Springs of Water, nor Stones into Rivers of Oil; he grants not the Favour to all Sinners hardened in their Luſts, and confirm'd in their Apoſtacy from him, to be converted and to be waſhed with the Tears of Repentance.

If thou ſeeſt a Thief repenting at the time of his Suffering, 'tis a particular Example that aboliſhes not the general Rule. By this Man God intends to comfort Sinners, who truly repent at the end of their days, and to aſſure them that the Arms of his Mercy are always open to receive them into his Favour. I confeſs that true Repentance can never be too late, but I affirm that it can never be too ſoon. 'Tis moſt certain, that at any time the Sinner repents, God will ſhew him Mercy, but that moment is not in our Power. For one Sinner that repents at the hour of Death, there are thouſands that depart in impenitency. And to ſee no other Example, but that which Mount *Calvary* offers to us. If thou ſeeſt on one ſide of Chriſt a Thief converted, and believing, look on the other ſide, and thou ſhalt perceive a Wretch, who having ſpent his Days in Wickedneſs and impiety, expires in his Sins belching forth grievous Blaſphemies and Reproaches againſt the King of Glory. So that if one of theſe remarkable Paſſages flatters thee, and lulls thy Conſcience aſleep, the other ſhould move and awaken thee with an Holy Fear Moreover the Thief was converted at the firſt moment, when Chriſt called and invited him. Therefore, now that you hear the Voice of God calling, harden not your Hearts as in the Day of Provocation, for fear that God ſhould ſwear in his Anger, that you ſhall never enter into his Reſt. Now you at this very inſtant that you read this, turn unto God

God with all your Heart, and he will have Pity and Compaſſion upon you.

When the Opportunity is once loſt, 'tis not eaſily, and at all times recover'd. Therefore Painters have repreſented Occaſion with a great Tuft of Hair on the Forehead, but all bald behind; unto every thing there is a Seaſon. God hath vouchſafed unto us a Time, and reſerved another for himſelf. Our Time is when we are invited to Repentance; but God's Time is when he manifeſts and declares his Juſtice and Judgments. During the ſpace of one hundred and twenty Years, *Noah*, an Herald of Righteouſneſs, preach'd Repentance to the old World, this was their time; but when God's abuſed Patience was juſtly provoked, it turn'd into Fury; then he ſent a fearful Deluge that covered all the Face of the Earth; this was God's Time, and the Day of his juſt Vengeance. When *Lot* ſpake to his Sons-in law to perſuade them to go out of *Sodom*; this was the time of their Salvation and Deliverance; but when Fire and Brimſtone overwhelmed and burned them alive, their Cries and Gnaſhing of Teeth were as uſeleſs as their Laughter and Mocking had been formerly unjuſt. When *Eſau* ſold the Privileges of his Birth-right, it was the time of thinking ſeriouſly upon the true and Heavenly Bleſſing; but when he had ſold it for a ſup of Pottage, all his Tears and Weepings were as fruitleſs as his Gluttony had been inſatiable, and his Temper prophane. When the Bridegroom in the *Canticles*, was at the Door with the Dew of his Heavenly Joys, and the Myrth of his Eternal Comforts; it was the Bride's time, and the occaſion that was offer'd to her, to enjoy the Heavenly Delights; but when ſhe had delayed a while, unwilling to riſe from her Bed, and put on her Coat, he was gone, and it was to no purpoſe that ſhe ſought him about the City. For inſtead of melting with the embraces of her Beloved, ſhe finds her Enemies that beat and wounded her. When the poor *Lazarus* begg'd his Bread at the Rich Man's Gate, it was the time when this unmerciful Man ſhould

have repeated and shewed Mercy to the Poor; but when in Hell burning in the Flames, 'twas in vain that he lifted up his Eyes to Heaven to seek for some Comfort. When our Saviour exhorted the *Jews* to believe in him, and he wept so bitterly upon *Jerusalem*, that had killed the Prophets; it was the time and oppotrtunity of this unhappy Nation, it was the time of their Salvation, and of God's Blessings; but when they had obstinately rejected this great God and Saviour, and desired that his Blood might be upon them and their Children, God cast them away from him and they are become a Scorn and a Reproach amongst all the Nations of the Earth. Finally, as it is to no purpose, that a Malefactor resolves to amend his Life when the Judge is at the Door, and when the Serjeants have caught him by the Throat, or when he is upon the Gallows ready to be strangled and executed: Likewise 'tis too late to begin to think upon God when Death seizes upon us, and Hell opens its Jaws to swallow us. Miserable Wretch! why despisest thou the Riches of God's Goodness and Patience, and of his Long-suffering, not considering that the Goodness of God invites thee to Repentance; but by the hardness of thine Heart that is without Repentance thou treasurest up unto thy self Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God, who shall render to every Man according to his Works? *Rom.* 2.

Certainly our Salvation is a matter too important to be neglected, our Life too uncertain to delay it till the next Day and our Soul too precious to run the hazard of losing it. If we had many, we might venture the loss of one, but seeing that we have but one only, and that if it be lost, all the Riches and Treasures of the World cannot redeem it, we should watch Night and Day to preserve it. We should be moved with an Holy Fear of so great a Loss, and decline whatsoever might cast this our precious Soul into the second Death, and eternal Damnation.

'Tis

'Tis our Lord and Saviour's Exhortation, *Watch*, ſaith he, *for you know not the Hour when the Lord is to come. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation; for the Spirit is willing but the Fleſh is weak*, Matt. 14. Mark 10. Luke 22. This Advice was ſo neceſſary, that he doth often repeat it. *Take heed to your ſelves, watch and pray, for you know not when the time ſhall be. Take heed to your ſelves leſt your Hearts be over-charged with Gluttony and Drunkenneſs, and the cares of this Life, and that Day ſurprize you unawares; for as a Thief it ſhall come on all them that dwell on the Face of the whole Earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye be accounted worthy to eſcape all theſe things that ſhall come to paſs, and to ſtand before the Son of Man*, Mat. 13. Luke 21.

To awaken us to move from our ſpiritual Drowſineſs, and prophane Sleep, our Saviour brings the Example of the wicked Servant, who ſaid in his Heart, *My Lord delayeth his coming*, Mat. 24. And therefore he began to beat his Fellow-ſervants, to eat, drink, and be be drunk; our Saviour adds, that the Lord of that Servant ſhall come in a Day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour when he is not expected, and ſhall cut him aſunder, and appoint him his Portion with the Hypocrites, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth, *Mat.* 24. The Parable of the fooliſh Virgins hath the ſame drift, they being fallen aſleep without any Oil in their Lamps, were ſo ſurprized at the Bridegroom's coming, that they could not be admitted into the Marriage-Chamber; 'twas in vain that they beat at the Gate with a *Lord, Lord open unto us*, Mat. 25. The Door could not be opened to them, but it was anſwered from within, *Verily I ſay unto you, I know you not.*

'Tis certain the chief and principal purpoſe of this and other Parables, is to teach us how we ſhould be prepared to expect the Glorious Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but they may very well be applied to Death; for it hath pleaſed God to keep ſecret and hidden the Day in which he will call us to himſelf,

and that of our Saviour's coming to Judgment, that we may be equally prepared, and disposed for the one as well as for the other. As we shall be found at the time of our Death, so shall we be judged at the great Day, when Christ shall come down from Heaven with the Angels of his Power, and from that Judgment there shall be no Appeal. Let us therefore put off the Sin that doth so easily beset us, and break all the Chains of our filthy Lusts. Let us disarm Death, and take from it its Venomous Darts, and its piercing Stings. Let us pluck off the Claws, and the Teeth of this furious Beast, and extinguish all its Fires, and it shall never be able to terrifie us. Let us live the Life of Saints, and God will give us Grace to die the Death of the Righteous, and to end like them. Let us live as we would at the instant when Death is upon our Lips. Let us live as if at every moment we were to die, and as if God were calling to us, *Come and appear to Judgment.*

And when Satan, the World, and our own Flesh solicite and draw us to Evil, let us say within our selves, is it thus that thou wilt reward the Lord thy God, and acknowledge all the Blessings and Favours that thou hast received from his bountiful Hands? O Fool, dost thou conceive that thou canst go to Heaven by marching the Road to Hell. If thou dost wilfully cast thy self away into the Depths of Sin, what assurance hast thou of rising again by Repentance? If thou forsakest God, art not thou afraid God will forsake thee? Is it thus that thou prepareſt thy self to die? Are these Lusts the Arms with which thou must encounter Death? Art thou ready to draw near to the sacred Majesty of thy God, and to appear before his great Tribunal. The Night is far spent, the Day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the Works of Darkness, and let us put on the Armour of Light, *Rom.* 16. Let us live as Children of God, and Heirs of his Kingdom, *Phel.* 3. Let us be blameless, and shine as Lights in the World. Let our Conversation be as Citizens of Heaven,

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from whence we expect the Lord Jeſus, *Eph* 2. Let us go to the Holy and Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, by the way of good Works which God hath prepared, that we might walk in them, *Zech.* 13. In all our Actions, Words and Thoughts, let there be engraven *Holineſs to the Lord.* Let us diſcover by our Deeds, that we really believe, without doubting, whatſoever the Holy Scripture declares of the eternal Pains of Hell, and of the unſpeakable Joys of Heaven, *Gal.* 6. Whilſt we have time, let us do good to all, but chiefly to the Houſhold of Faith, *Eph.* 5. Let us redeem the time, for the Days are evil. Follow not *Adam*'s Example, who to eat of the Fruit, ſo pleaſing to his Taſt, loſt the Paradiſe which God had given him. Let us not loſe the eternal Delights that God hath prepared for us from the beginning of the World, for a Moment of Carnal Pleaſure.

Let us imitate the Holy and Wiſe Virgins, put Oil in our Lamps betimes; let us enrich our Hearts with Faith, Hope, and Charity, and put on the Robes of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs. As God's Faithful Servants, let us labour to accompliſh our Task. Let us be ſtedfaſt, unmovable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, that when Death ſhall appear, or rather when the Prince of Life ſhall call us to himſelf, we may be ready to give him an exact account of our Talents, with which he had entruſted us, that we may ſay unto him in Sincerity and Truth, *I have done the Work that thou haſt given me, I have fought the Good fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith.* O moſt Excellent Lord, I having nothing elſe to do, but to receive from thy Hand the Crown of Righteouſneſs, which thou haſt promiſed to all that love thine Appearance. I have nothing elſe to do, but to enter into thy glorious Reſt, where thou doſt embrace in thine infinite Mercies, all ſuch as overcome Sin and Death, and keep thy Works unto the end.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for One who prepares for Death, by Repentance and an Holy Life.

SInce Sin hath brought Death into the World, and render'd this Enemy so terrible to us; enable me with thy Divine Vertue, to disarm it of all its Fiery Darts, and Mortal Poison. In regard thou hast prepared for me thine Heavenly Kingdom, from the Creation of the World: Grant me Grace to imploy the residue of this Life in purging my Conscience from dead Works, in studying the great business of Sanctification, that I may be in a readiness to enter into that Abode of Holiness, into which no impure thing can be admitted. O Heavenly Father, discover to my Soul, by the Light of thine Holy Spirit, the foolishness and deformity of Sin, and its dreadful Consequences: that I may abhor it as an infernal Monster, Satan's Image, and a grievous Pollution, that hath defaced in our Souls the blessed Features of thy self. Let me look upon it as a curs'd Burning, that hath kindled thy Wrath, and will at last set on fire and consume this Frame of the World. Let me look upon it as an intolerable Burden, under which Nature it self groans; and Heaven complains of it as a publick Murderer of our first Parent, of all Mankind, and of the Lord of Life. O that I may treat it as mine Enemy, that hath provoked thy Vengeance, and strives yet to cast me into eternal Torments: Make me sensible of the Beauty of Holiness, and of the Glory that shall Crown it; that mine Affections may embrace it as an unvaluable Jewel, taken from me by Satan, as an Image and Beam of thy Perfections, and as that which shall make the principal Part af our Happiness in thy Kingdom. O God of my Salvation! thou seest my Grief and inward Trouble, to have so long assisted this Tyrant Sin, to destroy my Soul, and to have neglected my chief Business in the World, to serve and glorifie thee. What shall I pretend as an Excuse for my self? O my Sovereign Lord! I have sinned against thee, and committed abominable Acts. But I repent in dust and ashes, and cannot but look back upon my evil Deeds with horrour. O God, who

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ſearcheſt the Heart! thou knoweſt that my greateſt Grief proceeds from my not grieving ſufficiently, and as mine Iniquities have deſerv'd. The number and greatneſs of my Crimes are not hid from thee; and thou underſtandeſt what I ought to do and to be, to obtain Pardon. O Lord, I ſeek not the Motive of it in my ſelf, but in thine infinite Mercy, that deſireth not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he ſhould turn and live. Turn me, O God, and grant me the Grace of Repentance. Thou art able to change this ſtony Heart, and cauſe it to yield penitent Tears; but rather give me, inſtead of this hard Heart, another faſhioned after thine own Image; an Heart that may be enflam'd with Love and Zeal for thee. O my Redeemer! thou haſt compleated the Work of my Salvation, by ſpilling thy own Blood to atone for us. Continue that good Work in us. Sanctifie my Soul and Body; and make me a new Creature. Mortifie this wicked Fleſh, with all its Luſts, that the Life I ſhall lead may be in imitation of the Holy Jeſus. Take poſſeſſion of me by the Directions and Government of thy Bleſſed Spirit, that I may deteſt and ſhun all Appearances of Evil, and the Garments defiled with Sin. O let the thoughts of Death, thy Holy Fear, the Miſery of departing Sinners, and the Happineſs of ſuch as die in thy Favour, be entertain'd continually in my Mind, that I may renounce all impiety, and Worldly Luſts, and finiſh my latter Courſe in Sobriety, Juſtice, and Religious Duties. But chiefly, let Charity influence my Affections and Actions; for ſuch Sacrifices are acceptable to thee. O merciful God, the great Buſineſs of Life is not quickly finiſh'd; my Days are but ſhort, and I know not how ſoon thou wilt fetch me away. Aſſiſt me therefore in the performance of what thou requireſt from me, and accompliſh me in thy good Work; that at thy coming I may not be ſurprized or troubled, being diligently imployed in thy Service. O my gracious and heavenly Father! vouchſafe unto me all thoſe Divine Qualifications needful to diſpoſe me for thy Eternal Communion, and for the ſociety of thy bleſſed Saints, that are gone before me; that at my Departure, my Saviour may receive and welcome my Soul, with a Come, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

The ſixth Remedy againſt the Fears of Death, is to repoſe our ſelves upon God's Good Providence.

SOme Perſons there are ſo brutiſh and ſtupid, that they never think upon the great End and Deſign of their Creation, and are not able to give a juſt account wherefore God hath put them into the World; carnal and earthly Minds, who imagine that they were created for themſelves, as brute Beaſts, only to eat and drink. Such are mentioned by St. *Paul*, their God is their Belly, and their End is eternal Miſery. But there are alſo ſome Wiſe and Vertuous Souls, that are continually meditating upon the Favours that they received from Heaven, which they imploy to their right and proper uſe. Such Celeſtial Underſtandings being enlightned from above, conſider very well that they are not born for themſelves, but for their Country, for their Parents, for their Friends, and chiefly to ſerve God and his Church on Earth. Therefore they deſire to live only to glorifie their Creator, and advance his Kingdom.

When this good Deſire is well govern'd, 'tis acceptable to God, as a ſweet ſmelling Sacrifice. This was *David*'s earneſt Deſire in the 119 Pſalm, *Let my Soul live, that it may praiſe thee.* This Holy Zeal forced ſo many bitter Tears from King *Hezekiah* in his Sickneſs, and cauſed him to intreat moſt earneſtly to live yet longer in the World. This Wiſe and Religious Prince well foreſaw the Fearful Evils, the grievous Confuſion, and the abominable Idolatry that was likely to ſucceed after his Death, in the Kingdom of *Juda*. He was therefore very deſirous to glorifie God on Earth, and to accompliſh the Reformation which he had begun. He deſired to have Children whom he might

might teach to fear God with all their Hearts, and to ſerve him according to his Holy and Divine Will, that he might cauſe Piety to continue in his Houſe, and Royal Family. He diſcovers this Holy Deſire in his Divine Hymn, which he ſung unto God, after his miraculous Recovery, *Behold, for Peace I had great Bitterneſs, but thou haſt in Love to my Soul delivered it from the Pit of Corruption; for thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy Back, for the Grave cannot Praiſe thee,* Iſa. 38. *Death cannot celebrate thee, they that go down into the Pit, cannot hope for thy Truth, the Living he ſhall praiſe thee, as I do to this Day, the Father to the Children ſhall make known thy Truth. The Lord was ready to ſave me, therefore I will ſing my Songs to the ſtringed Inſtruments, all the days of my Life in the Houſe of the Lord.* We find the ſame earneſt deſire in St. *Paul*; for when he looks upon himſelf, and upon the Miſeries that attended him on Earth, and lifts up his Eyes to ſee the Heavenly Bliſs that waited for him above, he deſires to depart out of this Earthly Tabernacle, and to be with Chriſt, and acknowledgeth that it would be his great Advantage. But when he looks upon the Church of Chriſt, his deſire of Salvation, and Inſtruction of his Brethren, cauſeth him to prefer their Comfort to his own Happineſs and Joy. 'Tis, ſaith he, *more expedient in you that I remain in the Fleſh, and I know for certain, that I ſhall abide and remain with you for your Advantage, and the Joy of your Faith.*

This deſire of Life, with an intent of glorifying God, is good and holy. But 'tis no eaſie Task to keep it within its juſt and lawful Bounds, for very often it becomes vicious, when 'tis ſtirr'd up by a fond Love of our own Perſons, which make us ſo loath to die.

For Example, when a great Prince animated with an Heroical Vertue, is engaged in a War for the preſervation of his Subjects, and for the delivery of many afflicted People from Oppreſſion and Tyranny; if God bleſſeth his Arms, and cauſeth his glorious Deſigns to ſucceed, he will not be pleaſed, if Death at that inſtant offer to croſs him, to break in pieces

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his Victorious Arm, to put an end to his Conqueſts, and to caſt his Crown to the Ground. He may juſtly complain in this manner, Muſt I now leave off ſuch a notable and brave Deſign? Muſt I here ſtop in the midſt of ſuch a Glorious Race? Muſt Death bury with my Body, the Expectations of ſo many good Men? I am afraid that all my Labours will vaniſh away with my Breath. I have juſt Cauſe to fear, that my fall will draw after me the Deſtruction of many Poor People that depend upon me. I fear, that Oppreſſion and Tyranny will reſume freſh Spirits and a greater Boldneſs, and prove, for the future, more grievous and unſufferable. O cruel and inhumane Death! by taking away my Life, thou bringeſt my Friends to Execution, and the Arrows that thou ſtickeſt in my Heart, pierce the Souls of many Innocent People.

Likewiſe, he that is promoted to be the King's Vicegerent in a Province, or to be a Governor of a Rich Country, an Important Place, may be grieved becauſe Death ſnatcheth him away in the midſt of all his Buſineſs, eſpecially if it be in troubleſome Times, and if he ſees none of a ſufficient ability to ſucceed him. Muſt I, will ſuch an one ſay muſt I quit ſo ſoon this glorious Employment, muſt I ſo quickly leave my Prince's Service, and forſake ſo many poor People as a Flock without a Shepherd? Death! how hateful and odious art thou? Thou delighteſt to bring all things into Confuſion and Trouble.

Thus a brave General of a Victorious Army, who being full of Courage, manageth a ſucceſsful War for the Honour of his Prince, and the Advantage of his Country, cannot but complain againſt Death, when he comes to ſubdue him before he hath totally ſubdued and overcome his Enemies; eſpecially if the times be ſo unhappy, that none is able to ſucceed him in that Employment; he will be ready to break forth into Complaints. Muſt I leave off ſo many glorious Deſigns? Muſt I forſake my moſt faithful Soldiers,

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and abandon them to the Mercy of their Enemies, or to the capricious Humour of an unexperienc'd Succeſſor? O Death full of Envy! Wilt thou pluck out of my Hands ſo ſoon, this conquering Sword, and cut off with one Blow of thy Scythe, ſo many great Expectations? In the ſame manner, he that ſits in the moſt honourable Seat of Judicature, as a Judge, a Preſident, or a Counſellor, or any other chief Magiſtrate, will doubtleſs mourn if Death ſeizeth upon him in the flower of his Age; eſpecially, if he fears that after him corrupt Men will ſucceed, who may be likened to whitened Walls. Muſt I, will he ſay, leave ſo ſoon this noble Office, in which I took ſo much delight? O inconſiderate Death, why doſt thou not ſuffer me to wear my Purple, until ſuch time as I ſhall be weary to bear it? Why doſt thou not permit me to ſit here upon this magnificent Seat, until I tumble off with Old Age.

Likewiſe a faithful Miniſter of the Goſpel, when he perceives the Work of the Lord to proſper in his Hands, Satan falling from Heaven by his Means, as a Lightning, and *Dagon* brought upon his Face to the Ground, may juſtly wonder at Death's Approaches, and ſpeak in this manner, Muſt I, ſo ſoon quit the Duties of this Holy Function, in which I took my greateſt Delight? Muſt I break off from this ſacred Work, by which I advanced ſo happily the Glory of God? I am afraid that when I am gone, ravening Wolves will enter into the Lord's Flock, and terrible Night of Ignorance will overſhadow our Poſterity.

Thus a Father of a Family, who paſſionately loves his Wife and Children, ſhall never ſee Death, but ſhall feel all his Bowels move, and his Heart tormented with Grief; he will ſigh out ſuch Expreſſions as theſe, Muſt I forſake a poor forlorn Wife, ſwimming in Tears? Muſt I leave my tender hearted Parents, who found my Life a Comfort, and will find my Death and Affliction? Muſt I abandon my dear Children, whom I love as my Soul, without a Guide, and in danger of loſing the

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ſmall Temporal Means that I have provided for them; in danger alſo of being overcome by the vicious Cuſtoms of the Age, and enticed to Idolatry and Superſtition.

That we may be able to govern this violent Paſſion, that prevails ſo much upon our Minds, we muſt labour betimes to bring our ſelves to this; *To reſt upon the good Providence of our Heavenly Father.* Chriſtian Souls, meditate upon this excellent Saying in the 37th Pſal. *Leave thy Ways to the Lord, and truſt in him, and he will direct thee.* And in the 59th Pſalm, *Caſt thy Burden upon the Lord, and he will ſuſtain thee.* Forget not alſo that bleſſed Exhortation of St. *Peter, Caſt all your Care upon God, for he careth for you.* Imprint alſo in your Minds, St. *Paul's* Aſſertion, *All things work together for good to them that love God.* Remember the noble Reſolution of this great Apoſtle, *According to my earneſt Expectation, and my Hope that in nothing I ſhall be aſhamed, but that with all Boldneſs, as always, ſo now alſo Chriſt ſhall be magnified in my Body, whether it be by Life or by Death.*

Thou deſireſt to be inſtrumental in the Service of God, and of the Publick. 'Tis an excellent deſire indeed and Praiſe-worthy, but it belongs to God to appoint the Service that he intends to receive from thee. It belongs to him to preſcribe to thee thy Task, and to order thy Bounds. He knows when he is to releaſe thee from thy Labour, and how long thou muſt fight. Is thine Eye evil, becauſe thy God is ſo good and gracious, to ſhorten thy Work and Troubles? All ſuch as follow chearfully the Banners of the God of Hoſts, and never retreat without the Command of the great General of Heaven and Earth, ſhall enjoy a bleſſed Victory, and obtain the Honour of the Triumph; as well the Novice and the freſh Soldier, as the Old and long Experienced. All ſuch as labour faithfully in the Lord's Vineyard, ſhall receive from him an eternal Reward, as well he that continues but an Hour, as the other that bears the Heat and burden of the Day. When

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thou ſhouldeſt have gone but a few Steps in the Paths of Righteouſneſs, thy God is ſo noble and liberal, that he will beſtow upon thee an incorruptible Crown of Glory, as well as if thou hadſt continued there many Years.

Great Princes, who yield to the King of Kings a religious Reſpect, that ſeek their greateſt Glory in the Croſs of Chriſt, ſubmit your ſelves altogether to the Pleaſure of your univerſal Monarch. For ſeeing the Lives of all Men are governed by his Wiſe Providence, he hath a particular Regard, and an high Eſteem of the Lives of Kings and Princes, the Sons of his Right Hand. Therefore whilſt 'tis expedient for his Glory and their Salvation, that they ſhould live upon Earth, he placeth round about their ſacred Perſons his holy Angels, and encompaſſeth them with a Wall of Fire. Remember that as ſoon as the King of *Iſrael* was ſeated upon the Throne, God commanded him to take in hand the Book of his Law, and to read in it all the Days of his Life. Ask from him that Wiſdom and Prudence that is requiſite to govern ſuch Multitudes of People, and beſeech him to grant unto you the Strength and Vertue that is neceſſary to bear ſo great a Burden. Let the Sword that he hath intruſted in your Hands, be to do Juſtice upon Offenders, and to protect the Guiltleſs. As you are living Images of God's ſovereign Authority over his Creatures, remember that you ſhould alſo imitate his Goodneſs and Mercy. Follow the Example of him who reſiſts the Proud, but gives Grace to the Humble. Live in ſuch a manner, that your Subjects may cheriſh and honour you as their common Father, may obey and ſerve you as their Lord, and may reſpect and fear you as their King. Suffer not your Heart to be puft up with Pride, when you behold the large Dominions, that God hath put under your Command, and the People that own you for their Sovereign; But lift up your Eyes to the ſpacious Heavens, take a View of their vaſt Extent, and ſee how the whole Earth is inconſiderable in com-

pariſon of them, and think upon God, before whom all Nations are but as the ſmalleſt Duſt of a Balance, and as a few drops of Water. Conſider well that your Subjects are Creatures that God hath made after his own likeneſs, and redeemed by the Death of his Son, and that they are to reign with you for ever in Heaven. Remember that the more God hath committed to your Truſt, the greater muſt be your Reckoning, and that you muſt one day appear in Perſon before his dreadful Throne, without Scepter or Crown, or as other wretched, Sinners to implore his Mercy. Search into your ſelves and examine what you are; your Bodies are ſubject to Wounds, Infirmities and Diſeaſes, as that of the meaneſt of your Servants; your Souls are alſo moved with the ſame Paſſions and Luſts as theirs. In ſhort, you are enter'd into the World in the ſame manner as the moſt miſerable Slave, and you ſhall go out of it again as he doth. So that if a crowd of Flatterers ſooth you up as they did *Herod*, *A Voice of God, and not of Man*, Acts 12. Mind well what God ſpeaks to you from Heaven, *I have ſaid that ye are Gods and the Children of the moſt High, nevertheleſs you ſhall die as Men, and you that are the chiefeſt, ſhall fall as the Reſt*, Pſalm 72. During the time of their abode in the World, imploy your Blood, Sweat, and all the ſtrength and Power that God hath put into your Hands, for the good and advantage of your Empire, and for the defence and preſervation of your People, that are under your Protection. And if, in the midſt of your greateſt and moſt flouriſhing Proſperities, Death come to give you a ſummons to depart, let fall the Scepter willingly, to join your Hands together, and to fall down and adore the King of the whole Earth. Grieve not for the loſs of Worldly Glory that paſſeth away as a Lightning, or as a Shadow, for God promiſeth another, that ſhall be more laſting than the Light of the Sun. If you can but overcome Death and your ſelves, God will cauſe you to ſit down upon another Throne, and will beſtow upon you a Kingdom that ſhall never be moved, *Revel.* 3. *Heb.* 12.

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Wiſe and Religious Princes, be not ſollicitous for the things that ſhall happen before your deceaſe. He by whom King's Reign, and Princes do Juſtice, is able enough to enrich your Succeſſor with the Graces and Qualities that become a Powerful Prince. It may be that he will beſtow upon him more Glory and Happineſs than upon you. When King *David* had ended his mortal Race, God took him into his Reſt. It ſeems at firſt, that the loſs of ſo good a Prince could not be repaired; but God cauſed *Solomon* to ſit upon his Father's Throne, and made him the Wiſeſt and the moſt happy Monarch of the World. *David* did but remove God's Ark, but *Solomon* built for a him ſtately and magnificent Temple. *David* was a Type of the Encounters and Victories of the Son of God, but *Solomon* repreſented his Glorious Triumphs, and that eternal Peace with which he ſhall bleſs his Choſen in the Kingdom of Heaven.

What if you leave your Children under Age, be not diſcouraged, for God will preſerve them, as the Signet upon his Right-hand, or as the Apple of his Eye. Think upon *Joſias*, who was but eight Years Old when he ſucceeded in the Kingdom of *Judæa*; nevertheleſs there was never a Prince more holy and more religious, none ever did more good to the Church of God. And that you may be able to ſtrengthen your Faith, and confirm your glorious Expectations, meditate upon the Life of *Joas*, who was but one year Old when his Father was killed, and an Infernal Fury ſought to deſtroy him, but in the middle of ſo many Tragedies God preſerved him alive, by a Miracle, and placed him in a glorious Manner, upon the Throne of his Fathers. Seeing therefore that 'tis the Pleaſure of him who gives and takes away the Earthly Crowns, leave chearfully this corrupitble one, to receive another that is immortal and incorrruptible. You alſo, noble Governours of Countries and Caſtles, that repreſent the Perſons of your Kings and Princes, remember that this Dignity comes not only from the Appointment of

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your Masters, but from God himself, who holds in his Hands the Hearts of all the Kings and Princes of the World. Remember what our Saviour told the Governour of *Judea*, *thou couldst have no Power upon me, if it were not given to thee from above*, John 19. Let all the World see by you, that there is nothing more agreeable with Piety towards God, than Fidelity and Loyalty to your Prince. Take heed that you abuse not your Power and Authority in satisfying your Passions, and pleasing your Covetousness or Vanity. Protect not the Guilty, and oppress not the Innocent. Seing that you are appointed to punish evil Doers, and to encourage such as do well, behave your selves as if you were always in the Sight of your Prince; or rather behave your selves, as in the Presence and in the Sight of God, before whom all Things are naked and open, as if you were to give up unto him an Account of your Stewardship. Whilst you are happily employ'd in the Service of your Prince, and of your Country, if Death comes to interrupt your Prosperity, yield your selves, without Resistance, to the wise Orders of him, who is both your Sovereign Lord, and theirs to whom you must be subject on Earth.

Trouble not your selves with Thoughts of the Things that shall happen after your Death, and think not but that there are yet some worthy and able to succeed you in your Imployments. When God is pleas'd to be favourable to Kings and to cause their Empire to flourish, he raiseth up faithful Ministers, and wise Governors; as when he gave to *Pharaoh* a *Joseph*, to *Hezekiah* an *Eliakim*, to *Nebuchadnezzar* a *Daniel*. When he pleaseth to search into his unfathomed Treasures, he can quickly provide Men after his own Heart, adorned with all the Abilities requir'd for a worthy Discharge of a glorious Employment. In the mean While, if thou hast overcome Satan, Sin, the World and Death, thou shalt go and take Possession of a greater and more lasting Glory. He that bears upon his Garments and Thighs this Inscription, *The King of Kings, and the Lord*

Lord of Lords, hath given out this unchangeable Promiſe, *he that ſhall overcome, and hath kept my Words until the End, I will give unto him Power over the Nations, and he ſhall govern them with a Rod of Iron.*

Right honourable Counſellors, that aſſiſt your Prince with your ſage Advices, and you inferior Magiſtrates and Judges, never forget what *Jehoſaphat* ſaid to the Judges of his Kingdom, 2 *Chron.* 19 *Take heed what ye do, for ye Judge not for Man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the Judgment. Wherefore, now let the Fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it; for there is no Iniquity with the Lord our God, no Reſpect of Perſons, nor taking of Gifts*, Pſal. 85. Whenſoever you go to take your Place amongſt the Judges of the Kingdom, remember that God ſits there upon his Throne, and every time that you give a Charge, or pronounce a Sentence, conſider that you are to follow God's Directions, and that this great Creator takes Notice of your Actions, Words, and of the Motions of your Heart, and that he underſtands your moſt ſecret Thoughts. Judge with the ſame Equity and Juſtice with which ye deſire to be judged. If you be tempted to overthrow Right, to conceal Truth, or to commit any Injuſtice, either by a baſe Compliance, by an Expectation of worldly Advantage, or for filthy Lucre; remember that 'tis the Devil that tempts you; pray therefore to God to deliver you from his Power. And that you may be better able to command your ſelves with an holy Awe, mind that Death ſummons you to appear in Perſon; nay, drags you before the univerſal Judge of Mankind, to give up an Account of all your Actions, and of the Sentences that you have given. But if Death ſurpriſeth you when you are diſcharging your Office with all the Diligence and Integrity imaginable; ſtay not 'till it forces you, but caſt off willingly the Robes of Judicature, to take the Habit of a Supplicant, and pray to God that he may not enter into Judgment with you, becauſe no living Creature ſhall be juſtified in his Sight, *Pſalm* 13.

Ought Let

Let not the thoughts of what shall happen after your decease, obstruct your Christian Resolution. There are Men enough in the World of a sufficient Ability, to supply your Places, and God is able to raise up some that we dream not of, as when he created in one day threescore and ten Judges in *Israel*, whom he endowed with sufficient Abilities, and with the Graces of his Holy Spirit. He may produce some that will be as Righteous and Just as your selves, and it may be, more enlightened with Discretion and Prudence than you. Come off therefore willingly from these Seats of Judicature, so beset with Thorns, upon which you should never rest without Horrour and Dread, if you sincerely fear God, and go with Confidence to the Throne of Grace, that you may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in the time of need, *Heb.* 4.

And as there may be as much regard to Religion in the Tents of *David*, as in the Temple of *Solomon*; and that the Sword of *Gideon* agrees well with that of the God of Hosts, I may make my Addresses to you, worthy Generals, brave Captains, and generous Nobility, unto whom Kings, Princes, and Commonwealths commit the leading of their Armies. I speak not to you prophane Atheists, who laugh at the Sacred Mysteries, and are of Opinion that all Fear of God must be banished out of our Troops and Companies, and that the most wretched Varlets are the best Soldiers. But I speak to you, Christian and Religious Commanders, who forget not, by your Promotion amongst Men, that you are nevertheless the Soldiers of Jesus Christ: And tho' you wear at your side a material Sword, forget not to imploy also the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God that dwells in your Hearts. Neither do I intend to speak to you that manage War, with an intent only to satisfie your Revenge, your Ambition, or your Covetousness; but I speak to you, brave and worthy Captains, who have purified your Weapons in an heavenly Fire, who undertake War, only to procure a more lasting Peace to the Publick, and fight only to serve your

your Prince and Country; you that are the great Bulwarks of States and Empires, by whoſe Labours and Vigilancy, Men ſleep in ſecurity. Let the whole World ſee by Experience in your Perſons, that there is nothing that agrees better with true Generoſity, than Piety and the Fear of God. Behave your ſelves always as in the ſight of your Maker, who is at your Elbows, and accompanies you in all your Actions. Remember that he hath commanded to remove all Filth from the Camp of *Iſrael*, becauſe of his Holy and Divine Preſence. If you will obtain his Bleſſing upon your Perſons and Deſigns, caſt out of your Armies the Filth of Vice, and puniſh, without Mercy, Rapes, Burnings, Impiety, and Blaſphemies Cauſe your Soldiers to put in practice St. *John* the Baptiſt's moſt excellent Advice to the Military Men of his time who enquired what they were to do to be ſaved? *Do violence*, ſaid he, *to no Man, neither accuſe any falſly, and be content with your Wages*. Live as Lambs and fight as Lyons. Spare as much as you can the Blood of your Soldiers, and ſhed not that of your Enemies, but againſt your Wills; for they are God's Creatures, and bear his Image. Never Truſt to your own Valour and Experience, but Remember that 'tis God that gives Courage, and ſtrengthens your Hand in the Day of Battle, who cauſeth Fear and Terror to fly whither he liſteth. Look always upon *David*'s Example; there was never a Captain more Couragious, nor more willing to venture his Life; and yet there was never a Perſon more zealous in Prayer to God, nor more ſubmiſſive to his Will, nor more careful to return unto him the Praiſes of all his Advantages. And if Death comes to put a ſtop to your Victories, or to call you away in a time when your Prudence and Courage is requiſite, wonder not at it; conſider that God offers you by this means an occaſion of a more glorious Victory, and of a more magnificent Triumph. For the Victory over thouſands of Mortal Men, and of the whole World, is nothing in compariſon of a Victory over Death and

Hell. Inquire not who ſhall ſucceed you in the Conduct of your Army, out of a Diſtruſt of God's Providence. For he who is able to raiſe up Children unto *Abraham* out of Stones, can raiſe up alſo from thence, Captains and Soldiers. When he pleaſeth to give a Check to the Enemies Pride, and to deliver his People from their Tyranny; he can raiſe up *Gideons*, *Jephtha's*, *Sampſons*, and ſuch like extraordinary Commanders. Who knows but that he will cauſe a General to ſucceed you, that ſhall have more Courage and Generoſity, and, perhaps, ſhall be bleſſed with a greater Happineſs, and more glorious Succeſſes? When *Moſes* departed to his Reſt, *Joſhua* commanded in his ſtead, and for that Purpoſe, God enabled him with a noble Spirit of Wiſdom and Courage. For one Enemy that *Moſes* overcame, *Joſhua* deſtroy'd Thouſands; whereas *Moſes* did but coaſt along the Land of *Canaan*, and turn up and down in the Wilderneſs: *Joſhua* brought the People of *Iſrael* into that pleaſant Country, and into a peaceable Poſſeſſion of it. Since therefore that 'tis God's Pleaſure, leave to others the Care of temporal Wars, and go ye, gather the pleaſant and delicious Fruits of an eternal Peace, which hath been purchaſed unto you by the Blood of the Son of God.

Likewiſe you faithful Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, remember to ſhew the Example of a Reſignation to God's good Pleaſure, according to your Doctrine. Let not Death cauſe you to draw back. Thou haſt, Brother, a Will to glorifie God on Earth; well, but thou ſhalt glorifie him better in Heaven, with more Zeal, and leſs Impediment. Whilſt thou art fettered with this ſinful Fleſh, thy Miniſtry muſt needs be accompanied with many Imperfections. Thou imagineſt, that if it pleaſed God to prolong thy Days, thou may'ſt be inſtrumental in the Reformation of the World; but thou art miſtaken, Brother; for this World is accuſtomed to Evil, and this Age is hardened in Iniquity. Preach as much as thou wilt to the Inhabitants of this inferior World, it ſhall be as in the Times of *Noah*,

the

the Herald of Righteouſneſs, when the Patience of God waited for the Converſion of Sinners; for the whole Earth is ſo corrupt, that all the Thoughts, and Imaginations of the Heart of Man are evil continua'ly. They are rebellious and ſinful from the Cradle; and if God doth not interpoſe his Almighty Hand, and declare in us the Vertue of his Holy Spirit, they will grow worſe and worſe, untill they tumble into their Graves. If thou afflict never ſo much thy juſt and innocent Soul, and ſpend thy ſelf in exhorting the greateſt Sinners to fly from the Wrath to come, and the Judgments of God that hang over their guilty Heads; it may be thou ſhalt be mocked by thy neareſt Relations, as *Lot* was by his Sons-in Law. When thou ſhouldeſt thunder out the Threatnings of God's Law againſt the Abominations of *Iſrael*, as zealouſly as the Prophet *Iſaiah*, thou ſhalt be forced at laſt to confeſs, *I have laboured in vain, I have employed my Strength for nought*, Iſa. 49. Jer. 6. When thine Eyes ſhould be converted into a freſh Spring of Tears, and thou ſhouldeſt ſpend the Days and the Nights in calling upon the Superſtitious, the Schiſmaticks, and Idolaters, to forſake their falſe Worſhip and their unchriſtian Proceedings; thou ſhalt not be able to ſoften the Hardneſs of their Hearts, nor overcome their Obſtinacy; but they will be ready to ſpeak to thee in the *Jews* Language to *Jeremiah*: *As for the Word thou haſt ſpoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, but we will certainly do whatſoever Thing goeth forth out of our own Mouths, to burn Incenſe unto the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out Drink-Offrings unto her, as we have done, we and our Fathers, our Kings, and our Princes in the Cities of* Judah, *and in the Streets of* Jeruſalem; *for then we had Plenty of Victuals, and were well, and ſaw no Evil*, Jer. 44. When thou ſhouldeſt ſpeak with a divine Tongue, and with an heavenly Wiſdom, thou mayſt have good Cauſe to cry out, *Who hath believed our Report? and to whom hath the Arm*

of

of the Lord been revealed? Iſa. 53. John 12. In ſhort, as the Rivers of freſh Water that run continually into the Sea, cannot cure its bitter and ſalt Qualities; thus thy good and holy Life, thy Learned and Excellent Sermons, will not be able to remedy the Curruption of this preſent evil Age, nor ſtop the Torrent, and hinder the overflowing of Vice. For thy Labour and Induſtry, if compared with the Corruption of the World, are as inconſiderable as a few drops of Water in compariſon of the Ocean. This curſed Earth may be watered with thy Sweat and Tears; it will nevertheleſs bring forth nothing but Briars and Thiſtles. The Weeds which thou thinkeſt to pluck up, will tear thy Skin, and draw Blood out of thy Hands. In ſhort, he that plants is nothing, nor he that watereth, but 'tis God who giveth the Increaſe, 1 *Cor.* 3.

'Tis juſtly to be feared, that in ſtaying any longer time in this unwholſome Air, thou mayſt receive ſome evil oppreſſion from the general Contagion. 'Tis to be feared, that thou mayſt ſully thy pure Hands by handling ſo many Wounds and Sores, and that the Thorns of this curſed Earth may pluck off the Wooll of thy harmleſs and innocent Life.

But when thou ſhouldſt have a thouſand times more Gifts and Graces, and that thy Labours ſhould bring far greater Advantages and Profit to Chriſt's Church, it belongs not to thee to give Laws to thy God, but to follow the Motion of his Will. Leave to him the chief care of his own Houſhold, and reſt upon his eternal Providence. He hath more right in the Church than thou canſt pretend to, for he hath created it by his Power, and redeemed it with his precious Blood. He that cares not for his own, eſpecially for thoſe of his Family, hath denied the Faith, and is worſe than an Infidel. And can God, who is Faithfulneſs it ſelf and the very being of Truth; God, who cannot deny himſelf, and whoſe Gifts and Callings are without Repentance, *Rom.* 12. Can ſuch a God caſt off all care of his Church, of that Church which he embraceth

braceth with an eternal Love, and cheriſheth as the Apple of his Eye? *Jer.* 31. This Father of Mercies, who hath not ſpared his own Son but hath delivered him to die for his Church, how ſhould not he with him freely give her all things? *Rom.* 8. He underſtands better than thou, and all the Men of the World, what is proper and advantageous for his Holy Congregation, and for every Member that compoſes it. He knows how to provide for all its Wants; for his Wiſdom is infinite, and his Providence is moſt wonderful.

When this great God hath a deſign to plague his Enemies, and to declare his Juſtice, he hath always fit Agents ready and his Quiver full of Arrows. As ſoon as he commands the Holy Angels that wait before him, to caſt their Sickles into the Earth, and to reap or pour down the Vial of his Wrath: Theſe Holy Spirits fly with an unſpeakable Swiftneſs to perform his Sacred Pleaſure, *Rev.* 14, & 16. Likewiſe when he intends to do good to his choſen, he finds in every Place the Heralds of his Mercy, and his Divine Hand is always full of Bleſſings. As the main Ocean of his wonderful Bounty can never be dried up, likewiſe the Channels by which he conveys them to us, ſhall never fail.

The cauſe of thy Complaints ſhould ſerve to appeaſe thy Grief, nouriſh thy Faith, and increaſe thy Hopes. For if thou art graced with extraordinary Gifts, this proceeds not from thy Nature, nor thine Induſtry; but God's Favour and Bounty. Now thou mayſt be aſſured that his Hand is not ſhortned, his great Power is not leſſen'd, the Well ſpring of all his Bleſſings and Wonders is not ſtopp'd nor dried up, *Iſ* 49. He that ſends a deſired Whiteneſs the Prognoſtick of an approaching Harveſt, to the ſpacious Fields, *Joh* 4. He ſends alſo into his ſpiritual Harveſt, Labourers when he ſees it convenient. In this latter Age, and in the old Age of the World, as well as in the firſt Appearance of his Church, *Luke* 19. He finds Men to work in his Vineyard, or rather he forms and faſhions them with the Hand of his Grace, and enables them by his holy Spirit; for he gives

gives the Mouth and the Tongue, he makes deaf, dumb, blind, and reſtores the Eye ſight; he calls Things that are not, as if they were, *Mat.* 20 *Exod.* 4. *Rom.* 3.

When he deſigns for himſelf a Tabernacle, he calls by Name a *Bezaleel*, and fills him with his Spirit of Wiſdom, of Underſtanding and Knowledge, in all manner of Workmanſhip, *Exod.* 31. When he reſolves to deliver the Children of *Iſrael*, from their *Babyloniſh* Captivity, and to build the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, he hath at his Command, *Cyrus*, *Darius*, and *Artaxerxes*, *Acts* 14. He ſtirs up *Zorobabels*, *Eſdras's* and *Nehemiahs*. Likewiſe when he intends to repair the Breaches of his Houſe, and to increaſe the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, he makes Servants and fit Agents, and beſtows upon them ſufficient Graces for ſuch a noble Work, *Pſ.* 8. *Mat.* 21. As he hath never left himſelf without Witneſs in doing Good, thus he hath never been without Witneſſes to declare his ſacred Truth, *Luke* 19 By the Mouth of Babes he perfects his Praiſe, and as our Saviour told the *Jews*, *If theſe held their Peace, the Stones would cry out*, Luke. 19. God will take the Pillars of the Idols Temples, to prop up his Church, rather than ſuffer it to fall down. He will change the Wolves into Lambs, and the Lambs into Shepherds rather than that his Sheep ſhould want their neceſſary Paſture. He chuſeth the feeble Things of this World, to confound the ſtrong; deſpicable, and ſuch as are not, to deſtroy ſuch as are, 1 *Cor.* 9.

Thus God never leaves his Church without ſome Teſtimony of his Favour, ſome powerful Inſtrument of his Grace. But many Times when he removes one good Thing from us, he beſtows upon us ſomething more rare and excellent. This Conſideration glads the Heart of *Joſeph* upon his Death-bed, as appears by what he ſaid to his Brethren, *I am going to die, but God will not fail to viſit you, and cauſe you to go up from hence unto the Land, that he ſwore unto* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *Gen.* 50 .For inſtead of a *Joſeph* who had occaſioned their Bondage, God raiſed up a

Moſes,

Moſes, who deliver'd them with a mighty Hand, and a ſtretched out Arm, 2 *Kings* 2. Thus God took up *Elijah* with a Chariot of Fire, but he gave unto *Eliſha* a double Portion of his Maſter's Spirit, and cauſed his glorious Miracles to appear more admirable. Likewiſe our Lord and Saviour, when he had finiſhed the great Work of our Redemption, he aſcended up into Heaven, a Cloud conveying him up to the Throne of his Glory; but according to the Promiſe, he hath not left us deſtitute, but hath ſent us the Comforter to dwell with us for ever, namely the Spirit of Truth, whom the World ſeeth not, nor can know, *John* 14. Chriſt's corporal Preſence was enjoyed but by a ſmall Number of People; but this divine Spirit is like a large River that ſwells and runs over every where, *John* 7. This Holy Spirit is not only with us, but alſo within us; he is poured out into our Hears, he ſeals us for the Day of Redemption, he is the Earneſt of our Inheritance, until the full Conſummation of the Glory reſerved for us in Heaven. Therefore when this merciful Saviour ſaw his Apoſtles afflicted in an extraordinary Manner for his Leaving of the World, he ſpeaks to them in this Language, *Becauſe I have ſaid theſe Things unto you, Sorrow hath filled your Hearts: Nevertheleſs, I tell you the Truth, 'tis expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you*, John 16. When St. *Paul* took his laſt Farewel of the Elders, and People of the Church of *Epheſus*, they wept bitterly, being grieved to the Heart becauſe he ſaid, *That none of them ſhould ſee his Face any more.* But to comfort them, he aſſures them that in Heaven they had a Father and a Protector, and ſuch a Shepherd as would never forſake them. I commend you, ſaith he, *to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them which are ſanctified*, Acts 22. Remember therefore, O Man of God, ſeriouſly to conſider all theſe Things; if the Lord who hath call'd thee to the ſacred Function of

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the Miniſtry, continues thee in the World, labour with Courage and Diligence in thine Holy Employment; be not tired in the Service of this good Maſter and merciful Saviour; fight the good fight of Faith, endure patiently all kind of Labour, as a good Soldier of Jeſus Chriſt; be as earneſt and as careful for the Lord's Sheep, as *Jacob* was for thoſe of *Laban*. Hear what he profeſſeth of himſelf, *In the day the drought conſumed me, and the froſt by night, and my ſleep aeparted from mine Eyes*, Gen. 20. *Jacob* endured patiently theſe grievous Pains and Labour, and the time of his Service, ſeem'd to him to be but a few Days, becauſe of the Love that he had for *Rachel*. Likewiſe thou wilt joyfully endure the Troubles of thine Office, and bear with patience all the hardſhips, if thou doſt ſincerely love the Lord Jeſus, and his heavenly Spouſe; if thou doſt eſteem the Salvation of Souls, for whom Jeſus Chriſt hath ſuffered Death, if thou haſt well underſtood the excellency of thine heavenly Reward, and the Glory prepared for thee, when thou ſhalt have finiſhed the time of thy painful and difficult Service, and of thy mortal Race. For they who bring many to Righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as the Stars for ever and ever, *Dan.* 12. *Jacob* had to do with a deceitful and unfaithful Man: But God is not as Man, that he ſhould lye, or as the Son of Man, that he ſhould repent, *Gen.* 23. *Be thou Faithful until Death, and he will give thee the Crown of Life*, Rev. 2.

If it is the Lord's Pleaſure to leſſen his Task, ſo that inſtead of employing thee in the Vineyard, he intends to take thee up into his Kingdom, to drink there of his new Wine; if at the time that thou thinkeſt of ſowing with Tears, thou art tranſported to the place where thou mayſt reap with Songs of Triumph: if in lieu of the Oppoſition which you muſt ſuffer from Sinners, God will grant to thee his eternal Conſolations, and receive thee into the harmonious Societies of the Church Triumphant, adore his Goodneſs, and his infinite Mercy, Caſt thy ſelf into his Hands, and reſolve

reſolve cheerfully, to will what is pleaſing to him. If during thine abode in this Valley of Tears, God hath given thee a livelihood ; and if thou hadſt found in him thy Joy, thy Satisfaction and thy greateſt Comfort, Death will be thy Advantage; thou ſhalt find in thy Saviour, thy Reſt, thy Glory, and eternal Delights, *Phil.* 1. Meditate often upon the Words of the holy Apoſtle St. *Peter, The Elders that are amongſt you, I exhort, who am alſo an Elder, and a Witneſs of the Sufferings of Chriſt, and alſo a partaker of the Glory that ſhall be revealed. Feed the Flock of God which is amongſt you, taking the overſight thereof; not by conſtraint but willingly, not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind, nevertheleſs being Lords over God's Heritage, but being Examples of the Flock. And when the chief Shepard ſhall appear, ye ſhall receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. 5.

You alſo, who are afraid to leave behind you a deſolate, afflicted, and comfortleſs Widow ; come and learn this Leſſon, to rely upon the Goodneſs and tender Compaſſions of the Father of Mercies, who never fails to Comfort the Diſtreſſed in all their Affliction, and who is always near to them that call upon him in their Troubles, 2 *Cor.* 2. *Pſal.* 145. He favours the Widow to that degree that he calls himſelf, *The Judge of the Widows*, Pſal. 68. that is, the Protector of their Integrity and Right, and ſevere Revenger of the Wrongs that they may ſuffer. Therefore God tells us in expreſs Words, *That he maintains the Widow, and eſtabliſheth her Borders*, Prov. 15. Since *Job* was ſo merciful as to cauſe the Widows Heart to ſing, *Job* 28. how much more may we expect from God's Goodneſs he will doubtleſs fill her with his heavenly Joys, and the raviſhing Comforts of his Holy Spirit? I mean not the fooliſh Widows that ſeek for nothing but Pleaſure, Worldly Diverſion, and carnal Paſtimes, who live in the Delights of the Age, and *who are dead whilſt they live* ; but I mean the wiſe Widows, who being left alone by their Husbands Death, have their Confidence and Truſt in God, continuing in Prayer Day and Night.

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Our great God and merciful Lord, hath not only said in general, that he is the Judge, the Protector, and Comforter of the Widow; but he hath vouchsafed to some his most signal Favours and extraordinary Blessings. In the Reign of *Ahab*, while a cruel Famine overspread the Land, God sent the Prophet *Elijah* to a poor Widow of *Sarepta*, who was preparing her self and her Son to die, as soon as they had eaten a little Remnant of Meal, and Oil that was left. But the holy Prophet comforted her in this Manner, *Thus saith the Lord God of* Israel, *the Barrel of Meal shall not waste, neither shall the Cruise of Oil fail, until the Day that the Lord sendeth Rain upon the Earth*, 1 Kings 5. Many poor Widows have met with the like miraculous Supplies. For by a secret Benediction God hath caused their Provisions, not to fail them. Though perhaps they have not enjoyed any extraordinary Plenty; this All-wise Purveyor hath furnished them with Things necessary for them. So that not only both they and their Children have subsisted in the greatest Calamities, but they have had the Honour of assisting God's Prophets. And as that poor Widow of the Gospel gave Alms out of her Poverty; such Mites have been more pleasing to God, than the Treasures of the Wealthy. Moreover, when the Son of God was in the World, he was pleased to express how much Care and Compassion he had of Widows. For when he met, at the Gate of the City of *Naim*, a poor Widow weeping bitterly for her only Son, that was carried out to be buried, he was moved with a tender feeling of her Affliction; therefore he raised the young Man to Life again, and restored him to his Mother. It was also at the Sollicitation of some devout Widows, that St. *Peter* raised *Dorcas* from Death to Life. I must needs take Notice here of an admirable Story, proper to comfort every faithful Servant of God. The Widow of a deceased Prophet, made this bitter Complaint to *Elisha*, *thy Servant my Husband is dead, and thou knowest that thy Servant did fear the Lord, and the Creditor is come to take unto him*

him my two Sons to be Bond-men, 2 Kings 4. God, who hears the Cry of the Afflicted, had Compassion on that poor distressed Widow, so that he Gave unto her, by *Elisha*'s means, in a wonderful manner, sufficient for the Payment of her Debts, and for to nourish her Family. By this glorious Example, God declares the Care that he will have of his Prophets Widows, whilst they walk in his Fear, and continue in his Holy Covenant.

To conclude, modern and ancient Histories are full of notable Examples of Wise and Vertuous Widows, who have discreetly govern'd their Families, and upon whom God's Blessings have visibly appeared.

Almighty God, who is wonderful in all his Works, causeth not only Fathers to make Provision for their Children, but he gives to some, such Children, in his Mercy, who provide for their Fathers, and are an extraordinary Blessing to their Family, as *Joseph* was to *Jacob* and his Houshold. Such Wise and Vertuous Children, who are so necessary to their Parents, whom they love and honour, might, out of their violent Affection for them, speak to Death in the Language of the young Man of the Gospel, *Suffer me to go first and bury my Father.* Let me alone a while in the World, suffer me to live, O Death, until I have accompanied my Parents to their Grave, until I have closed their Eye-lids, and perform'd the last Duties that Nature requires. But hearken, officious Son! what the Lord saith to thee, *Suffer the Dead to bury their Dead*, but follow thou me. Leave to them that remain after thee, the Care of Worldly Affairs, but do thou obey God's Call. Thy Charity for others must not cause thee to be cruel to thy self, and disobedient to the Command of thy God. Fear not to leave thy Father and Mother, when thou art going to cast thy self into the ravishing Embraces of thy Spiritual Bridegroom, and of thy Heavenly Father. The great God, who hath given thee, or rather lent thee to them, who caused them to subsist before thou hadst a Being, can feed and Bless them without thee.

His Mercy is not tied to thy Person, nor confin'd to thine Industry. When our Lord and Saviour was upon the Cross, at the sight of the Blessed Virgin, and the Disciple whom he loved, he said to his Mother, *Woman, behold thy Son*, and to St. *John*, *Son, behold thy Mother*, John 19. *and from that Hour that Disciple took her unto his own home.* In the like manner, when God calls unto his eternal Rest, him who was the Supporter of his Family, as *Joseph* was, he provides for them by some other means. So that if *Elkanah* could justly say to his Wife, when she wept, because she had no Child, *Am not I better to thee than ten Sons?* 1 Sam. 1. we may say with more Reason, that God's Grace, his Assistance, and the Comforts of his Holy Spirit, are more worth than ten thousand Children.

The strongest Passion, and that which I judge to be the most apt to hinder a good Christian, is that which Fathers and Mothers have for their little ones; especially if they be in an Age unable to help themselves. But that this natural Passion may not transport us beyond the limits prescrib'd by Reason and Piety; consider well the Promise that God made to *Abraham*, *I am thy God, and the God of thy Seed after thee*, Gen. 17. and what St. *Peter* told the Jews, *To you and to your Children was the Promise made, and to all such as are afar off, as many as the Lord our God shall call*, Act 2. Chiefly meditate well on, and imprint in your Minds, that which God spake to you from Heaven, by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Leave me thy Fatherless Children, and I will give them to eat, and let thy Widows trust in me*, Jer. 49. God is the Father of us all, but more especially of the Fatherless; he hath Compassion on them, and provides for all their Necessities. Thy Children are more tender to him than to thee; for thou hast been but a feeble Instrument in his Hand to put them into the World. But he is the Creator of their Souls, the Maker of their Bodies, and the Redeemer of them both. He loves them with a stronger and more constant Love than the best Fathers, and the most tender hearted Mothers. Therefore he assures

us,

us by his Holy Prophet, that tho' the Mother ſhould forget the Child whom ſhe gives Suck, and tho' ſhe ſhould have no pity on the Fruit of her Womb, yet he will never forget us. So that all the Children that fear God, may ſay as *David*, *When my Father, and my Mother have forſaken me, the Lord will receive me.* Pſalm 27.

If *Job* had a tender Care of the Orphans, *Job* 31. and *Pharoah*'s Daughter had Compaſſion on the Tears of a little ſtrange Child, how much more ſhall God, who is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, have pity on Children, that he hath redeemed with the precious Blood of his only Son? *Exod.* 2. 2 *Cor.* 1. Since he hears the Cries of the young Ravens, he will ſooner hear the Prayers, Sighs, and Tears of his Servants Children. *Pſal.* 147. *Matth.* 6. He cloaths the Graſs of the Field, which to day is, and to morrow is caſt into the Oven, *Gen.* 2. how much rather will he cloath your Children, O ye of little Faith? Doth your Heavenly Father nouriſh the Birds of the Air, and will not he rather feed your Children that are better worth than all the Birds together, *John* 4. In ſhort, ſince God hath had Compaſſion on little *Iſhmael*, and on the Children of *Ninive*, how much rather will he regard Children that have been Sanctified to him from their Mother's Womb?

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt when he was on Earth, took up in his Arms the little Children that were brought to him, laid his Hands upon them, and recommended them to God his Father. And now that he is in Glory, his Love and tender Compaſſion for them is not leſſen'd. Therefore if we offer him our Children with all our Hearts, he will take them into his Protection, and will ſtretch over them the Arms of his Mercy, that he will never take from them. In ſhort, ſince he promiſeth to them the Kingdom of Heaven, and His Eternal Felicities, he will not with-hold from them Things needful for this preſent Life.

We can do nothing without God, but God can do all things without us. A great many Children become debauch'd, and are spoil'd by their Parents over-fond Tuition; whereas many that are out of their sight, and live when they are departed, shew good Examples of Piety and Godliness. For Example, in *Isaac*'s House, in the presence of this Holy Man, there was a prophane *Esau*, a Glutton; whereas *Jacob* that lived at a distance from his Parents, when he fled for fear of his Brother, had always before his Eyes the *Fear of* Isaac *his Father*, Gen. 26. Gen. 31. that is to say, the God whom his Father worshipped. In *Jacob*'s House, *Reuben* defiled his Father's Bed with Incest; whereas *Joseph* in *Potiphar*'s House, chose rather an apparent Death, and present Sufferings, than to touch his Master's Wife, *Gen.* 39. *David* had the unhappiness to see some of his Children guilty of Incest and Murder; whereas *Joas* and *Josias*, two Orphan Princes, in their tendereſt Infancy became Vertuous and Religious Kings, Zealous for the Service of God. How many Children are there, who notwithstanding all the Care and Labour of their Fathers, fall into Extremity of Misery? How many are taken from their Parents Embraces, and dragg'd from thence to the Gallows? whereas there are others who without Father, or Parent's Assistance, don't only escape grievous Dangers, but rise to Honours and Dignities; as *Joseph* in *Egypt*, *Daniel* in *Babylon*; and *Esther* a Fatherless, and poor Captive Child became a Queen; and God made use of her and of her Credit to deliver his People from *Haman*'s Conspiracy. We see every day that God blesseth in an extraordinary Manner many Orphans. Cast your Eyes upon the Children of the blessed Martyrs, and you shall find many whom God hath made notable Instances of his special Favours, and of the Mercy that he promiseth to shew unto thousand Generations of them that serve him, and obey his holy Commands. Thou shalt meet with some that are much more Happy in this Life, than the Posterity of the Persecutors.

ſecutors. Thou ſhalt ſee them with Aſtoniſhment beſtow their Alms upon the Children of ſuch as have plundered their Houſes and ſpoiled their Goods.

Whilſt you are yet in Being, exhort your Children to fear God, to ſerve, and to addict themſelves with all their Heart, to the Study of Piety, that hath the Promiſes of this Life, and the Life to come. Teach them firſt to ſeek the Kingdom of God and its Righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added to them over and above.

Finally, when your Life ſhould be much more uſeful to your Children than it is, remember what our Lord and Saviour ſaith, *He that loves Son or Daughter more than him, is not worthy of him.* Heaven is far more excellent than the Earth. The Salvation and the Happineſs of our Souls is to be preferr'd to all the Conſiderations of Fleſh and Blood. 'Tis not juſt that ſuch as have given us, or to whom we have given the Enjoyment of a temporal Life, ſhould hinder us from the Fruition of a Spiritual and Eternal Life. Beſides, when we recommend them to God, we put them into the Protection of a true, and a wiſe Friend, who is acquainted with their Neceſſities, who is ſo good to procure them that, which ſhall be needful for them, and is Almighty, able to accompliſh all things which may be for their Advantage.

Let us therefore conclude, that 'tis the Duty of a good Father that fears God, not to reſiſt Death, nor to fly from it when the Lord calls. But according to the good Example of the ancient Patriarchs, he ought to end his Days willingly with the Praiſes of God in his Mouth, and with Exhortation to his Children to love him, fear him, and ſerve him with all their Heart, to continue in his Holy Covenant, and to prefer him to all the Riches and Honours of this miſerable Earth. And as when our Saviour had beſtowed his Bleſſings upon his Diſciples, a Cloud carried him out of their ſight into Heaven: Likewiſe when a good Chriſtian ſhall have thus given his Bleſſings to his Children, he will ſhut his

Eyes to all inferior Things, and think upon nothing but upon the Eternal Bliss of the Heavenly Paradise.

If God calls us to himself in a miserable and wretched time, when our beloved Infants are weeping about our Bed, ready to say to us, as *Isaac* unto *Abraham*, *My Father, here is Wood, a Fire, and a Knife, but where is the Beast for a Burnt-Offering?* Gen. 22. God causeth the visible Signs of his heavy Displeasure to appear every where. In every corner we see nothing but Fire and Sword. Death's frightful Image, and the fearful Appearance of Massacres do scare and terrifie us. Destruction is come into the holy Places, the Fire hath reached as far as God's own Sanctuary, and no body is able to deliver us. The Deluge of God's Wrath hath overspread our Land in such a manner, that as *Noah*'s Dove, we can find no Place to set our Feet on. All our Expectation is, that God would also reach down his Hand to us from above, to receive us into that Ark which is above the Heavens, and to which our Soul is now departing, *Gen.* 8. If our dear Children speak to us in this Language, let us, with the Courage, Assurance, and Faith of the Father of the Faithful return to them this Answer, *My Children, the Lord will provide*, Gen. 12. Rom. 4. 'Tis he that acts beyond Probability, and contrary to Expectation, who causeth the Dead to live, and calls things that are not, as if they were. He will send to you his good Angels to help you in all your Necessities. When you shall be reduc'd to the uttermost Extremity, ready to receive the last Stroke of Death; God's Hand will stop the Sword of his Justice, he will change your Crying and Fears into Joy and Eternal Gladness. There will be some holy and devout Soul, that loves the publick Peace and Tranquillity, that will bring to you the Olive-branch of Peace. God can appease the Tempest with his Breath; at his Command the Winds will be still, and the roaring Waves, that are ready to devour you, will return to their former Tranquillity. Otherwise he will preserve you miraculously alive in the midst of the greatest Troubles, and most fearful Confusion. And

as *Abraham* found a Ram intangled in a Buſh; likewiſe in the midſt of the ſharpeſt Storms of Affliction, and in the moſt intricate Difficulties that you dread, you ſhall find unexpected Sweetneſs and Comforts. And as ſeveral Colours of the beautiful Rainbow, appear upon the Cloud, whence proceed the Storms and the Rain; likewiſe thus, in the greateſt Afflictions God will give you ſome Teſtimonies of his Fatherly Care, and of his Divine Love. The Confidence that you ſhall have in God, ſhall never be confounded; for the Love of God is ſpread in your Hearts by the Holy Spirit, that he hath given you. The hotter the Fire of Affliction ſhall be, the more and greater Miracles it ſhall bring forth. The higher the Waters of your Flood ſhall riſe, the nearer they will approach your Souls to God, and the nearer you will draw to Heaven, the Place of your Souls everlaſting Reſt. Comfort therefore your ſelves, my dear Children, and aſſure your ſelves, that by the favourable Aſſiſtance of God's Grace and Mercy, we ſhall ſpeedily ſee one another again. I ſhall not return to you, but you ſhall come to me; for I am going to that Spacious and Magnificent Dwelling, whither our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt is gone before, to prepare a Place for us, and where he will embrace us all. *I am going up to my Father and your Father, to my God, and to your God.*

A Meditation and Prayer for ſuch as are in any Command, who prepare for Death, by truſting upon God's good Providence.

O *King of Kings, and Sovereign Lord of the World! I adore thy Divine Majeſty, with a real Senſe of thy ſpecial Favour, for having placed me in this honourable Station, advanc'd me to this Command and Empire, which I am now ready to reſign into thy Hands. Suffer me not to be puffed up with Pride, or to forget my Mortal Condition in the midſt of all this outward Splendour and Glory.*

While I continue here, grant that I may study to promote thy Honour and Service, and treat such as are under me as my Fellow-Creatures, and thy Servants. Grant that I may so behave my self as in thy sight, and in all my Actions be ready to give up an Account to thee, my great Judge of my Temporal Administration: Grant that Death may never surprise me, but that I may be always prepared to entertain it with Joy, to lay down this Crown and Scepter, to cast off this Purple Robe, and all these Marks of my Authority, to yield them into thy Hands. Wean my Heart and Affections from their Temporal and Deceitful Vanities, that I may be willing to part with them at thy Command. Let me look up to thy heavenly Kingdom, meditate upon those Divine Excellencies of Eternity provided for me, from which Death will have no Power to remove me. I submit my self wholly with all the Riches, Grandour, and Power that thou hast bestowed upon me, unto thy Divine Pleasure, to dispose of me as thy Wisdom shall judge convenient. But I beseech thee, good God, take into thy Protection the Subjects that I leave behind. Continue thy Truth and Gospel to them and their Posterity. Grant that my Successor may have the same Zeal, Love and Care for Religion, that he may be a Support to it, and cause it to flourish more and more. Give to all thy People Grace to Fear and Love thee, to be United among themselves, and Obedient to Authority. And now, Lord, receive me into thine Eternal Mercy, and into that Kingdom, where I may glorifie thee for ever. Amen.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a Minister of the Gospel, who looks upon Death with Joy and Comfort.

O Universal Shepherd and Bishop of Souls! I cannot sufficiently acknowledge and value the Graces and Mercies, with which I find my self blest, and thy Favour in calling me to an Office which the Angels esteem an Honour to be employed in, and in which thou hast been active during thine Abode in the World. Thou hast been pleased to appoint me a Minister of thy People, and to commit to my Trust the dearest and most precious Thing of the World, namely, thy Church, for which thou hast expressed so great a Love to give thy self and life to redeem it. I am sensible, O Lord, of my Weakness and Unsufficiency for so weighty a Charge; since I am to encounter with the World's Hatred and Cruelty, the Devil's Wiles and Malice, and many Hardships besides, from those who should encourage me. I expect therefore from thy Power and Goodness the Assistance needful to support me under all temporal Difficulties, while thou art pleased to continue me in this Employ. Open a wide Gate to the Gospel of thy Grace, that all People may see the Salvation of God. Disappoint all the Counsels of thine Enemies, and grant that I may neither be frighted nor corrupted in the Discharge of my Duty. Subdue Satan under our Feet, and grant that thy Truth may be always victorious over Error and Heresy. I am now, Lord, to appear before thee, and give thee an account of my Stewardship. I appeal therefore to thine infinite Knowledge, that can witness for me, how faithfully and sincerely I have endeavoured to perform the Duties of my Calling, and my Conscience can testify for me, that I have declared nothing, but what is agreeable with thy Divine Oracles. I have endeavoured to instruct the Ignorant, to discourage Vice and Profaneness, to comfort the troubled in Mind, and in all things to promote Religion, Piety, thy Glory, and the Good of thy Church in the World.

I have

I have prefer'd thy Will, and thy Heavenly Treasure to all Worldly Advantages. I have taken a singular pleasure in declaring the wonderfull Councils of thy Wisdom, and the Mysteries of thy Kingdom. I have delighted and endeavour'd to save Souls, so that I may speak with David, The Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up. *But for all this, I pretend not to be Justified before thee. In all Humility I cast my self at thy Feet, to implore the Pardon of my frequent Imperfections, Neglects, and Miscarriages, which I know I have been guilty of in thy Service. I confess, I have been wanting in my Zeal and Charity, too remiss in the Reproof of Vice, too much concern'd for my self, and too affectionate for my worldly Interest. O Lord, if thou shouldst now treat me according to the Severity of thy Justice, and require from me the Souls perish'd by my Negligence, or evil Example, I should expect the Doom of the unprofitable Servant. But there is Mercy reserved for me with thee, O my God! Accept therefore my Repentance for all the Errors and Omissions of my Life past; and lay them not to my charge; but comfort me with thy Salvation. Strengthen my Faith, increase my Hope and Assurance in thee. And when Death shall come to make a Dissolution, give me Strength and Grace to welcome it as thy Messenger, sent to remove me from my Station, to free me from my Pains and Labour, and to convey me to thine Eternal Rest; where I shall be no longer sensible of the Viciousness and Impieties of the Age. Gracious God, preserve thy Church and People from all ravenous Wolves, and mercenary Souls; and raise up a Faithful, solid, wise, and learned Clergy. Bring in our Dissenting Brethren, and give a check to the Spirit of Division, that we may all serve thee in the Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace. But now I am call'd to another Ministry, where I shall meet with no Trouble, nor Resistance; no Weariness, Grief, Pain, Sorrow, or Displeasure; where I shall be received into the Embraces of my Blessed Saviour who will lead me to the Fountain of living Water, and wipe away all Tears from mine Eyes.* Amen.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for the Father of a Family.

FAther of Eternity, I yield unto thee my unfeigned Thanks, because thou hast made me an happy Instrument, to put into the World, Children out of whose Mouths thou mayst accomplish thine own Praise, and who may serve thee here below, and worship thee for ever in Heaven, amongst the thousands of Angels. Whilst I have been in the World, I have brought them up in thy Love and Fear. I have caused them to suck from the Breast the Milk of Piety; and when they were come to an Age of Understanding, I have taught them to walk in thy Precepts. I have laboured to shew them a good Example, and to guide them in thy Truth. And now that I am ready to return unto thee, who art the Author of my Life and Being, the only Source of my Happiness, I leave them in thy merciful Hands, beseeching thee to look down upon them with the Eyes of thy Compassion. They are thine, Lord, acknowledge thine own Image and Handywork. Thy Finger, hath fashioned these Bodies, where so many Wonders are to be seen. And these Souls that animate and move them, are the Breath and Beams of thy Divinity. Thou hast engaged to be our God, and the God of our Posterity after us. Thy great and precious Promises have been made to us, and to our Children. O Heavenly Father, I desire not that thou shouldest take them out of the World, but that thou shouldest keep them from Evil. Cover them under the Shadow of thy Wings, and preserve them from those Miseries and Calamities, which thou hast threatned to send upon the Inhabitants of the Earth for their Sins. If thou chastisest them, let it be with the Rod of Men, and with the Scourges of the Sons of Men; but withdraw not from them thy Grace and thy Fatherly Compassion. Let the Flames of Affliction render their Faith more Pure, their Lives more Holy, and their Zeal more Sincere and Earnest; and let it prepare them for thee and thine Eternal Bliss. O Holy Father, thou seest that the Age in which we live, is extreamly corrupt, that

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the Earth is enclined to Vice, and that Sin reigns every where. Thou knowest also how weak the Nature of Children is, and how inclinable to Evil. Therefore strengthen them, I beseech thee, with such Antidotes as may preserve them from the Infection of the Times. Suffer not the Wickedness of the World to gain upon their Affections, nor Satan to prevail upon them by his Suggestions, nor Evil Company to spoil their pious Education. Give them an Understanding to know thee, and Heart to Love thee, and Affections to embrace thee and thy Glory. Let thy Holy Angels guard them by Night and by Day. Let thy Providence defend them, thy Word instruct them, thy Promises comfort them, and thy Holy Spirit regenerate them, and imprint in their Souls thy Blessed Image. Give them neither Poverty nor Riches, but nourish them with Food convenient. Make them to Taste of the Heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come. Inflame them with thy Love and Charity, and adorn them with all Christian Virtues; but chiefly, Sanctify them with thy Holy Spirit, and make them to become new Creatures: Since without Sanctification none shall see thy Face in Glory. Confirm them for ever in thy Holy Covenant, and give them Grace to transmit it to their Posterity after them, as a Blessed Inheritance, that thou mayest be glorified by them from Generation to Generation, to all Eternity. Suffer not the World, nor Hell, to pluck them out of thine Hand, that nothing may separate them from the Love which thou hast shewed to them in Jesus Christ thine only Son. Let not Death terrify them, but let it rather rejoice and comfort them, because that 'tis the Entrance to the Glorious Dwelling of their Heavenly Father, and to the Celestial Paradise. *Whatsoever Change or Alteration shall happen here below, let them always lift up their Eyes to thee, who art the same Yesterday and to Day, and shalt be the same for ever. Let them never forget their Duty to thee, from whom they have received their Being and Life, that they may prefer the Glory of thy Great Name, the Purity of thy Worship, and the Hopes of thy Heavenly Kingdom, to all Worldly Glory, Magnificence, Riches, Advantages, and Pleasures of the Flesh. Merciful, and Almighty Lord, I shall not*

say

ſay to thee as Eſau *did to* Iſrael, *when he had bleſſed* Jacob; My Father haſt thou but one Bleſſing? *For I am certain that thou haſt an infinite Number, and many inexhauſtible Fountains of all manner of Bleſſings. But I beſeech thee, with all the Zeal and Earneſtneſs that I am capable of, to bleſs my dear Children with thy Heavenly and Principal Favours. Take them into thy Protection, bear them in thy Hands, embrace them with thy tender Compaſſion, and let them be as dear to thee as the Apple of thine Eye. I am now leaving the World and my Children, without Grief, or miſtruſting thy Care of them. I am aſcending with Joy up to thee, who art my God, my Father and their Father; and I truſt in thy great and Eternal Mercies, that one Day we ſhall ſee one another in thine Heavenly Kingdom, when we ſhall be admitted to behold thy Face, which ſhall fill us with unſpeakable Gladneſs and Pleaſure.* Amen.

CHAP. XIII.

The Firſt Conſolation againſt the Fears of Death; God will not forſake us in our moſt grievous Agonies.

MAN is naturally afraid of Pain, and abhors all Sufferings and Grief. Now the moſt of us are perſwaded that 'tis impoſſible to Die without enduring great Torments; therefore they abhor Death, not ſo much for its own ſake, as for the Evils it inflicts upon us.

That we may be able to drive away this ill-grounded Fear, and ſtrengthen our Minds againſt all Apprehenſions, we muſt firſt conſider, that Death is not ſo dreadful and painful, as is commonly imagined. The Holy Ghoſt calls it a Sleep, and the Heathens themſelves have ſaid, that Sleep is Death's Couſin-german, and the Image of frozen Death. Now Sleep creeps upon us inſenſibly, it Charms our Senſes ſoftly, and with inviſible

inviſible Fetters it ties and ſtops all our moſt active Faculties. Tho' we ſleep every Night, we are not able to diſcover how this happens to us. 'Tis ſaid of *Socrates* one of the moſt famous Men of the firſt Ages, having in obedience to the Decree of the *Athenian* Judges drunk Poiſon, when he felt the Venom benumming his Senſes, and Death creeping into his Veins, he declared with a pleaſant Countenance, *That he had never ſwallowed any thing more ſweet and comfortable.* Nothing can be imagin'd more pleaſant, than the Death of the Old Patriarchs. The Holy Scripture tells us, That when *Jacob* had made an end of commanding his Sons, he gathered up his Feet into the Bed, and yielded up the Ghoſt, *Gen.* 49. The ſame is related of King *David*, that when he had perſuaded *Solomon to fear God, and to do Juſtice, he ſlept with his Fathers*, 1 Kings 1. God is as merciful to many in theſe latter Days, to cauſe them to die in ſpeaking and calling upon his Holy Name. Their Souls are not pluck'd from them by violence, but of their own accord they leave the Body, and fly into Heaven with an holy Chearfulneſs. The Separation of ſuch Souls happens without Pain, Grief, or Suffering. Such are like to a Taper, that goes out without any blaſt of Wind, of its own accord, when the Wax that keeps it alive, and nouriſheth its Flame is totally ſpent. If you perceive ſome toſs'd and tortured with grievous Pangs in their Death-bed, they are not properly the Pangs of Death, but the laſt Strugglings and Motions of Life. For I cannot imagine, that at the Moment of the Separation of our Souls from our Bodies we ſuffer any Pain, becauſe at that Inſtant, the Senſes are then lulled aſleep, and our Bodies have no more Strength, nor Life to hinder the Soul's departing.

Death is ſo far from being ſo dreadful and painful, as we commonly imagine, that on the contrary, 'tis that very Thing that puts an end to all our Pains and Miſeries. And I am perſuaded that the Diſeaſes, that bring us to our Graves, are not ſo grievous as the other

ther Diſtempers that we endure whilſt we live here on Earth; ſuch as are a cruel Gout, a Stone in the Kidneys, or a Cancer in the Breaſt; for they are Tortures that rack us continually, and a Fire that conſumes us without ceaſing. But when our Pains ſhould be far more ſenſible, and that we ſhould have Reaſon to impute them to Death, we have no Reaſon therefore to fly from it, or to abhor its Approaches. For we have as good cauſe to curſe the Hour of our Birth, and weep for our Victories, for there is no Birth without Pain, nor Victory without Struggling. The moſt Glorious and Flouriſhing Lawrels are watered with Blood and Sweat.

The moſt excellent Things are attain'd with the greateſt Difficulties; and to ſpeak according to the common ſaying, as *One Nail drives another*, ſo one Evil is a Remedy to many other Evils. We commonly ſeek, as a good Thing, that Evil that frees us from the violent Pains that we can ſcarce endure. To be healed of our Diſtempers, we ſwallow bitter Pills and Potions, to gripe and torment our Bowels. To be freed from the Stone, we ſuffer a moſt painful Cutting. And that the Gangreen, which infects one of our Limbs, might not get to our Heart, we endure it with Patience to be cut off, whether it be Arm or Leg. Therefore tho' Death ſhould be much more grievous, bitter, and more cruel than is commonly repreſented; yet we ought to embrace it willingly, becauſe it delivers us, not only from ſome Diſeaſe, or ſome particular Pain, but generally from all Pains, Aches, and Diſtempers. The Phyſick expels not always the Humour that diſquiets us. When we have drawn out a Stone from the Bladder, many times others grow in the Place that are worſe. The Surgeon's Hand, let it be never ſo expert, anſwers not always his Patient's Expectation; inſtead of removing his Pain, it ſometimes encreaſeth it. But the working and Cure of Death, is always certain, and never fails; the Succeſs is always happy to a Chriſtian Soul.

That

That I may supply thee with some Comfort in the midst of thy great Pains and Sufferings, *My Brother*, or *My Sister*, remember that these Things happen to thee not by Chance, but God appoints them as his Wisdom judges convenient. Ascribe not thy Disease to the Influence of the Stars, to blind Fortune, *&c.* but lift up thine Eyes to his Appointment, who hath stretched out the Heavens, and commanded the Succession of the Seasons, and who is the Author and Lord of thy Life. We need not tempt God, as the *Philistins* of old, and require from him a Miracle, to know if it be his Hand; for God assures us, that he himself inflicts the Wound, and binds it up; that his Hand strikes, and heals again, 1 *Sam.* 5. *Affliction cometh not forth of the Dust, neither doth Trouble spring out of the Ground*, Job 5. Who is able to say, that these Things are come to pass, and the Lord hath not commanded them? Doth not Evil and Good proceed from the Appointment of the most High? There is no Evil in the City but God hath done it; that is to say, that there is no Distemper, nor Affliction, but he over-rules and governs it by his wonderful Providence.

This Perswasion will stop our murmuring in the midst of our greatest Troubles and violent Pains. It will cause us to say with *David*, *I have held my peace, Lord, and have not open'd my Lips, because it was thy doing.* Or if we offer to speak, it shall be in the Language of a blessed Servant of God, *Lord, thou troublest me, but 'tis sufficient for me to know, that 'tis thy Hand*, Job 2. As if he should have said, this Physick is very bitter, O great Physician of my Soul and Body, but I will freely drink it up, because thou hast prescrib'd it. 'Tis not just to receive Good at the Hand of God, and refuse Evil; to complain of a Disease that he hath sent us for a few Days, instead of Blessing him for the Health which he hath continued to us many Years. In short, when our Souls shall be troubled with the Anguish of Death, when Drops of Blood shall come out of our Veins, we must in such a case lift up our Eyes to Heaven,

ven, and ſay with our Lord and Saviour, *Father, if it pleaſe thee that this Cup ſhould not paſs away from me, except I drink it, thy Will be done.*

The ſame Conſideration will keep us from falling into Deſpair, and from fancying, that the Evils will ſwallow us up. For ſince God ſends both Evil and Good, and that he is faithful and juſt, that he is true and merciful, he will not ſuffer us to be tempted, that is, that we ſhould be afflicted above that we are able, but with the Temptation he will make way to eſcape, that we may be able to bear it, 1 *Cor.* 10. He kindles not all his Wrath at once, and employs not all his Fury. He diſcovers not all the Strength of his Arm, *Pſal.* 78. but when his Anger is hotteſt, he remembers to have Pity and Compaſſion on the Afflicted; for he knows of what we are made, that we are but Duſt and Aſhes, *Hab.* 3. He remembers that we are but Fleſh, that is to ſay, Weakneſs it ſelf, a Wind that paſſeth away, and returneth not again, *Pſal.* 103. He regulates his Chaſtiſements, not according to the Horridneſs of our Sins, but according to our great Weakneſſes, *Gen.* 18. *Pſal.* 78. Therefore when God ſpeaks of *David*'s Son, the true and lively Image of the Holy Seed, with which he had concluded an Eternal Covenant, he ſpeaks in this manner, *If he commit ſin, I will chaſtiſe him with the Rod of Men, and with the Stripes of the Children of Men, but my Mercy ſhall not depart away from him*, 2 Sam. 7. And St. *Paul*, treating in general, of the Afflictions with which God viſits his Children, 1 *Cor.* 10. he ſtyles them, *Humane Temptations*, to aſſure us that they ſhall never exceed the Strength and Power of our weak Nature.

The wiſe and experienced Phyſician appoints neither Phyſick nor Bleeding to the Patient, until he hath well exmined his Pulſe, and underſtood thereby the Diſpoſition of his Body; and ſhall not God's Eternal Wiſdom, that never acts without good Reaſon, and that perfectly knows the Pulſe and Temper of our Souls, that ſearcheth our Reins, and ſees our very Heart,

proportion his Phyſick and Remedies to our Weakneſſes? For his Deſign is to heal, and not to deſtroy us. He once inflicted Puniſhments upon *Babylon* by Meaſure, and numbred the Viols of his Wrath which he poured upon the Seat of the Beaſt: And ſhall not this good God meaſure the Rods, and weigh the Afflictions with which he reproves his Children? Shall not he number their Sighs and Tears? This Conſideration comforts King *David*, *Thou*, ſaith he, *God, telleſt my Wandrings; put thou my Tears into thy Bottle; are they not written in thy Book?* Pſal. 56. Altho' Fleſh and Blood may think otherwiſe, I am perſwaded that Diſeaſes may be looked upon as the ſweeteſt and moſt favourable Affliction. It was *David*'s Perſwaſion; for when he was to chuſe one of theſe three Plagues, either War, Famine, or Plague, which is the moſt grievous, moſt hated, and dreadful of all Diſtempers, he choſe the Plague. We ſhould never forget the Reaſon of his Choice, *Let us fall now*, ſaith he to the Prophet *Gad*, *into the Hands of the Lord*, for his Mercies are great; *and let me not fall into the Hand of Man.*

The Evils which God ſends to us, are Expreſſions of his Love, and of his fatherly Care of us. For God begins his Judgments, that is, his Chaſtiſements, at his own Houſe, and ſhews moſt Severity to the Servants whom he loves beſt, 1 *Pet.* 4. Therefore he tells the Angel of the Church of *Laodicea*, *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten*, Revel. 3. The greateſt Affliction that can happen to us in the World, is never to be afflicted; and the moſt grievous Temptation, is never to be tempted. St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks moſt excellently upon this Subject, *Forget not*, ſaith he, *the Exhortation which ſpeaketh unto you as unto Children, My Son, deſpiſe not thou the Chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth; and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. If ye endure Chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with Sons; for what Son is he whom the Father chaſteneth not? But if ye be without Chaſtiſement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Baſtards, and not Sons*, Heb. 12. All

All things work together for good to them that love God, *Rom.* 8. The Diſeaſes of the Body, are the Phyſick of the Soul. The Aches which afflict thee, are Inſtructions to thy Mind. God intends to make thee ſigh for thy Sins, to water thy Couch with thy Tears, and abhor the Remembrance of thy former Miſcarriages, *Pſal.* 6. By the Cauſes of thy preſent Pain and Grief, he intends to taint thy Fleſh, mortifie thy Luſts, and make thee partake of his Holineſs, *Heb.* 12. If it pleaſe God to ſanctifie his Afflictions to thee, thou wilt be able to ſay with *David*, *It was good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy Commandments. Before that I was afflicted, I went aſtray, but now I keep thy Word*, Pſal. 119.

Tho' our Lord and Saviour was the only Son, and the Beloved of the Father, *Heb.* 5. yet he learned Obedience by the Things that he ſuffered. God hath predeſtinated thee to render thee conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the Firſt-born among many Brethren. God purpoſes to ſtrengthen thee with an holy Conſtancy, and to teach thee to poſſeſs thy Soul with Patience, *Luke* 21. He cauſeth thee therefore to learn by Experience, that all Fleſh is as Graſs, and all the Glory of Man as the Flower of Graſs. He deſigns to humble thee under his mighty Hand, that he may lift thee up in due time. 1 *Pet.* 3. When God purpoſed to bring the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, *Exod.* 21. 5. he cauſed the Yoak of their grievous Bondage to be more heavy, and loaded them with more intolerable Burdens. For the ſame reaſon God ſends Afflictions, and fills us with Bitterneſs, becauſe he would bring us to a Loathing of the World, and of its Vanities, and to think upon Heaven, and its Eternal Happineſs, 1 *Cor.* 11. He chaſtiſeth thee, that thou may'ſt not periſh with the World; he puniſheth thy Body, that thy Soul might be ſaved.

As the Gold is tried in the Fire, thus the Lord caſts us into the Flames of Affliction, that our Faith might be tried, and appear more precious than fine Gold,

1 *Cor.* 5. We glory in God in the Midst of Tribulations, knowing that Tribulation produceth Patience, Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, 1. *Pet.* 3. Now Faith doth not make us ashamed, because the Love of God is spread in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, which hath been given to us. God will kindle again thy languishing Zeal, and enliven thy Prayers, that they may be more acceptable to him. Tell me not that thy Distemper is an heavy Burden, that hinders thy Soul from lifting it self towards Heaven; and that thy grievous Aches dry up the Moisture of thy Tongue, and cause thy Lips to stick together; for I mean not the Prayers composed by Art, but the holy Affections, and earnest Sighs of the Soul, sent up to God. A Groan of an oppressed Soul, and a Sigh forced from us by Necessity, and a Tear dropt from a penitent Heart, are far more acceptable to him, than Prayers of forty Hours, that come forth of an hypocritical Mouth.

When the Prophet *Moses* saw himself inclosed between *Pharaoh*'s Army, and the *Red Sea*, he was so grievously perplexed, that he could not open his Mouth; but God heard the Voice of his Heart, and answered his silent Request. King *Hezekiah* muttered as the Crane, or as the Swallow, and groaned as the Pigeon; and God had a respect to his Groaning, and Tears, and heard him from his holy Sanctuary. The Sighs of *Jonas* in the Whale's Belly, mounted up through the Waves of the Sea, and ascended to the sacred Habitation of God's Glory. The Cries of Jesus dying upon the Cross, have pierced through to the Bosom of our Heavenly Father, and have moved the Bowels of his Eternal Mercies. In short, God speaks thus of all his Children, *Before they cry, I will grant them their request; and as they shall be yet speaking, I shall have heard them.* Therefore the Royal Prophet saith not only, *That God hath heard the Prayers*, but *hath heard the Desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their Hearts, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.* For that reason, when the Apostle St. *Paul* makes mention of that Spirit that supports our Weaknesses,

and

and that teacheth us to pray, he ſaith, *That he crieth in our Hearts, Abba, Father, and maketh requeſt for us with Sighs and Groans that cannot be uttered*, Rom 8.

Take good Courage, *My Brother*, or *my Siſter*, and be not frighted at the Sight of Death. Thou ſeeſt a narrow Paſſage, a Way all beſet with Thorns and Bryars, but 'tis Heaven's Gate, and the Way that leads to thine Heavenly Paradiſe. For we muſt of Neceſſity march through a Valley of Tears, before we can enter into the City of the Living God, *Pſal.* 84. We muſt paſs through many Tribulations to come to the Kingdom of Heaven, *Acts* 14. Bleſſed are they whom God afflicts, for they ſhall be comforted, *Matth.* 5. Bleſſed is the Man that ſuffereth Temptation, for when he ſhall be ſufficiently proved, he ſhall receive the Crown of Life, which God promiſeth to them that love him, *Jam.* 1. The Lord ſends thee this Affliction, and this grievous Temptation, not only for thine own Good and Salvation, but alſo for the Benefit of others. By his wonderful Wiſdom he preſerves the Communion of Saints, and ſo diſpoſeth of every one, that we all contribute to the Building of his Tabernacle. Upon one he beſtows Riches, that he ſhould be bountiful in Alms-deeds; to another he gives Learning, that he might inſtruct the Ignorant, and comfort the Afflicted; he raiſeth others to great Honours and Dignities, that they might be able to protect the Innocent, and deliver the Oppreſſed. Others are afflicted with deſperate Evils, and grievous and long Diſeaſes; others are depriv'd of their moſt needful Senſes, as of their Eye ſight, or of their Hearing, that they might edify their Neighbours by an Holy Conſtancy and Chriſtian Patience. The Aſhes of poor *Job*, have more Luſtre than all the Gold and precious Stones of the World. 'Tis many Ages ſince he endured grievous and dreadful Calamities, nevertheleſs, his Patience is yet propoſed to us for our Example, and to the end of the World, it will always inſtruct the Church of God. He teacheth thee by the Evils which thou endureſt, to be moved with Mercy and Compaſ-

ſion towards others in the ſame Condition. For as he required, that the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould be gracious to Strangers, becauſe they had been Strangers in the Land of *Egypt*; likewiſe, he ſends to thee Afflictions, that thou mighteſt pity the Afflicted, and ſuffer with them as Members of the ſame Myſtical Body. This appears in Jeſus Chriſt our Head; for tho' the chief End of his Sufferings was to redeem us, and reconcile us to God his Father; nevertheleſs, the Holy Ghoſt informs us, That he was like unto us in all Things, Sin excepted, that he might be a merciful High-Prieſt, and have Compaſſion on our Infirmities.

Finally, the Affliction that grieves thee, is not only ſent to thee for thy Salvation, and for the Inſtruction of thy Neighbours, but alſo for the Glory of the Great and Living God, who hath made and formed thee. For we may ſay of every Diſeaſe that happens to good Men, as Chriſt ſaid of *Lazarus*'s Diſtemper, *This Sickneſs is not to Death, but for the Glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified by it.* Thou may'ſt be ſevere to thy ſelf, but thou muſt be charitable to others, and judge diſcreetly of thy Brethrens Affliction. When thou art in Pain or Trouble, think ſeriouſly upon thy Miſcarriages, and turn unto God with all thy Heart. But when thou ſeeſt others caſt upon a Bed of Sickneſs, do not argue from thence, as *David*'s Enemies, that 'tis becauſe they have committed ſome grievous Crime. Rather conſider, that it may be a Means which God deſigns to imploy to declare his Power, and his Servants Patience, Faith, Piety, and Virtues. Therefore our Lord and Saviour tells the Apoſtles, when at the ſight of a Man, blind from his Birth, they enquired from him, Whether the Man had ſinned, or his Father or Mother, becauſe he was born blind; *That neither the Man, nor his Father, nor Mother, had ſinned, but that the Works of God might be made manifeſt in him,* John 5. By theſe Words we are not to imagine that they were without Sin, for there is none juſt, no not one; but we muſt underſtand that they were not guil-

guilty of any heinous Sin, nor had committed any ſuch Crime, as had drawn upon them God's Vengeance from above. It was God's Will that this poor Man ſhould come into the World with that natural Imperfection, that he might make him an Inſtance of his Grace, and declare in him his Almighty Power: and that our Saviour, in giving him his Sight, might make it appear that he was the true God, who faſhions the wonderful Eye, and that he was the true Light that enlightens every Man coming into the World, *Pſal.* 94. *Joh.* 1. Likewiſe, when ſome came to inform this great and wiſe Saviour, what had happened to the *Galileans*, whoſe Blood *Pilate* mingled with their Sacrifices, he replied in this manner, *Suppoſe ye that theſe* Galileans *were Sinners above all the* Galileans, *becauſe they ſuffered ſuch Things? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh. Or thoſe eighteen, upon whom the Tower in* Siloam *fell and ſlew them; think ye that they were Sinners above all Men that dwelt in* Jeruſalem? *I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh,* Luke 13.

God is glorified divers Ways by the Afflictions and Calamities which he ſends to his Children. For, firſt, he juſtifies them before all the World, from the Calumnies which are caſt upon them, and he diſcovers thereby to all, the Sincerity of their Love, and their unfeigned Obedience. Satan accuſeth us for ſerving God for the Advantages which we receive in this Life, *Job* 1. becauſe he is pleaſed to protect and favour us by his over-ruling Providence. Therefore God removes many times from us, that which is pleaſing and delightful to the Fleſh; he gives us the Bread of Affliction for our Food, and the Waters of Sorrow for our Drink; he preſents us with Cups full of Bitterneſs, and cauſeth his Rod to return upon us often. By theſe grievous Temptations, he ſtops the Mouth of the Accuſer of our Brethren, who accuſeth them Day and Night before God, *Iſa.* 30. He declares by that means to all the Enemies of our Salvation, and of his Glory, that we put our full Confidence in God alone, and in his un-

changeable Promiſes, and not in the outward Tokens of his Mercy and Favour, *Rev.* 11. He ſhews to all the World that the Anchor of our Hope is not fixed here below, but that 'tis faſten'd in Heaven, where Chriſt is entred as our Fore-runner, *Heb.* 6.

As God is glorified in Afflictions, he is alſo honoured by our Deliverance. If the Land of *Judæa* had not been peopled with Deaf, Dumb, Lame, Blind, Decrepit, and poſſeſs'd with Devils, *Acts* 9. If *Æneas* had not been ſick eight Years, if a poor Woman had not been grieved with a Bloody Flux twelve Years, if another had not been vexed with a Diſeaſe that had bended his Body, if the ſick of the Palſie had not been lying in his Bed thirty eight Years, if the Daughter of *Jairus* had not been dead, if the Widow's Son of the City of *Naim* had not been carried to his Grave; in ſhort, if *Lazarus* had not been buried four Days, the Glory and Divine Miracles of our Lord and Saviour had not been admired all over the World, *Mat.* 9. *Luk.* 13. *Joh.* 5. *Mat.* 9. Likewiſe our deſperate Diſeaſes, and our unexpected Recoveries, when humane Skill can do nothing, declare to the moſt ſenſeleſs Souls, that 'tis God alone that can give the Wound, and bind it up, and that leads to the Sepulchre, and brings back again, *Luk.* 7. *Job.* 11. *Job* 5. 1 *Sam.* 2. God's Deliverances of his People from their Afflictions, are of two Sorts, for either he takes away the Burthen from us, or elſe he ſtretcheth out to us his merciful Hand, and helps us to bear it; either he removes his Affliction, and pacifies our Grief; or he ſtrengthens us with Power and Courage, and arms us with Patience, and a generous Reſolution, needful in ſuch a caſe. This appears in a notable manner in the Apoſtle St. *Paul*; for fear that he ſhould be lifted up in Pride, becauſe of the Excellency of his Divine Revelations, God gave him a Thorn in the Fleſh, and ſent the Angel of Satan to buffet him, and to encreaſe the Bitterneſs and Sharpneſs of his Diſeaſe. This holy Man prayed often to remove

move it from him; but God took not this Thorn away from his Fleſh, nor did he check that Meſſenger of Satan, that afflicted him; but he deliver'd him in a more illuſtrious manner. For he ſtrengthened him with his Divine Spirit, enriched him with his Graces; he made him feel the Virtue and Power of Chriſt within him, and accompliſh'd his Virtue in *Paul*'s Infirmity. Inſomuch that this great Apoſtle cries out in the ſharpeſt of his Afflictions, with Tranſports of Joy, *I take pleaſure in Infirmities, in Reproaches, in Neceſſities, in Perſecutions, in Diſtreſſes, for Chriſt's ſake; for when I am weak, then am I ſtrong; I can do all things in Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*, 2 Cor. 12. This may be alſo ſeen in the Martyr St. *Stephen*; for he was condemned to die a Death the moſt painful and grievous that we can imagine; but God gave him ſuch powerful Comforts, and fill'd his Mind with ſuch Joys, that his Face ſhin'd as that of an Angel. You muſt underſtand the Words of St. *Paul* in that manner, in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, *Acts* 6. *Heb.* 5. Jeſus Chriſt having offer'd up Prayers and Supplications, with ſtrong Crying and Tears, unto him that was able to ſave him from Death, and was heard, in that he feared; for he was not altogether freed from the Sufferings and Torments of the Croſs, but he endured them couragiouſly, and was more than Conqueror in all Things. He drank up the very Dregs of the Cup of God's Wrath, but by his Divine Power, he overcame the Strength of the Poiſon. His Heavenly Father took him not down from the Croſs, nor out of the Hands of his Murderers, but he hath erected upon it his Glorious Trophies, and the Croſs hath been as his Triumphing Chariot. Likewiſe, when you ſee a Chriſtian bear up in the Midſt of a grievous Affliction, and overcome his Grief by his Conſtancy and Patience, who inſtead of murmuring, rejoyceth, and comforts himſelf in his Diſtreſſes; you may then conclude, that ſuch an one is ſtrengthened by God's Divine Spirit, who upholds him, and accompliſheth his Heavenly Virtue in his Servant's Infirmity.

mity. This is the most miraculous and excellent of all Deliverances.

I confess, some approve this Discourse very well, and admit these Consolations in their ordinary Diseases; but as soon as any extraordinary and violent Griefs seize upon them, they are apt to murmur against God, and to complain that their Punishment is too grievous. Some proceed further to curse, as *Job*, the Day of their Birth; and being brought into Despair, are ready to cry out with *Cain*, my Punishment is greater than I am able to bear. Unhappy Man! Wilt thou imitate the barbarous Heathens, who curse the Sun when it burns them, and let fly their Arrows against Heaven when it thunders? Wretched Man! What will it avail thee to affront thy Creator? What Advantage wilt thou reap from the Blasphemies which thou belchest forth against the Sun of Righteousness? Miserable Worm of the Earth, contemptible Dust, wilt thou undertake to contend with God, to pluck him from his Throne, and to break the invincible Arm of his Power? Dost thou imagine to stop the Hand of his Vengeance, by offending and sinning against him? Wilt thou quench the Fury of his Wrath, by spitting in his Face? Believest thou, that he will stretch forth his Hand to deliver thee, and to increase thy Blessings, whilst thy Mouth is open to blaspheme him, who is thy Sovereign Lord?

Listen well I beseech thee, Friend, to my Advice; and I will assist thee out of the Labyrinth where thou art unhappily intangled; and with God's Help, I will cause thee to understand, that thou complainest wrongfully against him, who performs all things advisedly, and with Justice and Reason.

First, Run over the whole Course of thy Life, and consider how many wicked Acts thou hast committed; some by Indiscretion, others willfully; how many Words have escap'd out of thy Mouth, how many Thoughts have been entertain'd in thy Mind against the Commands of Almighty God. Consider seriously

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the Number and Heinouſneſs of thy Sins and Miſcarriages; and thou ſhalt find that God's Puniſhments are far leſs than thy Deſerts; and that for one ſenſible Stroak of a bitter Pain that thou feeleſt, thou haſt deſerved many thouſands. So that thou ſhalt have Cauſe to confeſs with the Prophet *Daniel*, *O Lord, Righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us Confuſion of Faces*, Dan. 9. And thou wilt ſay with *David*; *Innumerable Evils have compaſſed me about, mine Iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up, they are more than the Hairs of my Head, therefore my Heart faileth me; there is no whole Part in my Fleſh, becauſe of thine Indignation, nor Reſt in my Bones, becauſe of my Sin*, Pſal. 40.

2. Conſider how many are in the World, to be prefer'd before thee for Piety, and yet ſuffer ſharper and longer Evils, than thou haſt hitherto endured, and have not had ſo much Comfort and Aſſiſtance. If thou compareſt thy Condition with theirs, thou ſhalt find that God ſpares and favours thee very much.

3. Caſt thine Eyes upon the Death and Paſſion of our Lord and Saviour; who being juſt and innocent, hath ſuffered for us wicked and abominable Sinners. Thine Affliction is painful, I confeſs, but that which this merciful Redeemer hath undergone for thee, was far more unſufferable. Let his Exclamations, his Tears, and Drops of Blood, which came out of his Veins be a Witneſs; and that earneſt Prayer which he repeated three times upon his bended Knees, *Father, If it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me, that I may not drink it.* Let that doleful Voice upon the Croſs declare it, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*

4. Weigh in juſt and equal Scales of the Sanctuary, all the Sufferings of this Life, with the Torments of Hell, which thou haſt juſtly deſerved. Compare them together, and thou wilt quickly conclude, that all thy Pains are nothing in compariſon to the grievous Tortures of that Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, where there are Weeping and Gnaſhing of Teeth. If thou art ſenſible of theſe vaniſhing Pains, conſider well, how much thou

thou art obliged to the Goodneſs of God, who hath freely pardoned all thine Offences, and redeemed thee from that eternal and unſpeakable Miſery of the other Life.

5. Thou muſt imitate thoſe Men, who having their Sight dimmed with the extraordinary Splendour of bright Colours, or of a Body of Light, turn off their Eyes to look upon leſs offenſive Objects. Inſtead of handling always thy Wounds and Sores, inſtead of thinking of the Afflictions, that lie heavy upon thee, meditate upon the Goodneſs and Favours of God, vouchſafed to thee ſince thy Conception until now. I give thee leave to put in one ſide of the Scales, all thy Croſſes, Loſſes, Diſeaſes, Pains, and Grief, upon condition, that in the other Ballance thou wilt caſt all the Mercies, Favours, Bleſſings, and Deliverances, which thou haſt received from God's liberal Hand. 'Tis true, thou groaneſt under thy Miſery, and complaineſt of thy Condition. Thou verily believeſt that there is none ſo miſerable as thou art, ſo that willingly thou wouldſt ſay with the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Doth not this move ye, O ye that paſs by? Behold and ſee if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce Anger.* But when there ſhould be nothing elſe but this alone, that God hath called thee to the Knowledge of his Holy Will, enriched thee with the Graces of his Divine Spirit, and ſown in thy Heart the Seeds of Eternal Life, and the bleſſed Hopes of ſeeing his Face in Glory; thou oughteſt to look upon thy ſelf, as one of the happieſt Creatures under Heaven.

6. Finally, thou muſt meditate with a religious Attention, upon the Joys, and the eternal Bleſſedneſs of Paradiſe; for *I reckon*, with the Apoſtle, *that the Sufferings of this preſent Life are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. When we caſt our Eyes upon the Earth alone, we judge it to be very ſpacious and large. Our ſight is loſt in the Contemplation of ſo many Provinces, Cities, and Kingdoms;

doms; but when we compare it with Heaven, we find it to be but a Point. Likewiſe when we look upon, and reckon up the Hours, Days, Weeks, Months, and Years of our Sufferings, the Time appears very tedious and long; but when we compare all theſe Parcels of Time with Eternity, they ſeem to us but a Moment. Tho' we ſhould have been plung'd in the Depths of Evils and Miſeries, from the firſt Inſtant of our Entrance into the World, until the laſt of our going out: Yet we have reaſon enough to ſay with St. *Paul*, *Our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory; while we look not at the Things which are ſeen, but at the Things which are not ſeen; for the Things which are ſeen are temporal, but the Things which are not ſeen, are eternal*, 2 Cor. 4.

The only Spring of all our Comforts is God's gracious Promiſe of ſeaſonable Help in time of need. Imprint therefore in your Minds theſe divine Paſſages, *When he that loveth me ſhall call upon me, I will anſwer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him*, Pſal. 91. *The Lord delivers from all Temptations, them that honour him, he is rich unto all that pray unto him*, 2 Pet. 2. *He is near to all them that call upon him; yea, to all them that call upon him faithfully*, Rom. 10. *He accompliſheth the Deſire of the Humble, he hears their Cry*, Pſal. 149. *The Righteous is encompaſſed with many Evils; but the Lord will deliver him from them all*, Pſal. 34. *Call upon me in the Day of thy Diſtreſs, and I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me*, Pſal. 50. When a poor Subject is courted and viſited by his Prince, in the Time of his Sickneſs, he looks upon it as a great Favour, and an Happineſs indeed. And when we enjoy the Preſence of a dear Friend, whom we deſired to ſee, in the Midſt of our moſt grievous Pains, we are wont to ſay, *Methinks I feel no more Pain, now that I have the Satisfaction of your good Company*. Now the Glory of God's Majeſty accompanies the Tenderneſs of his Love. He is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, who comforts us in all our Afflictions. He is like that faith-

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ful Friend who never forſakes us. For in our greateſt Calamities, he ſuccours us, *Prov.* 18. He is the King of Kings, and yet our moſt cordial and ſincere Friend, who frequently viſits the Houſes of Sorrow, and is near to every broken and bruiſed Heart, *Pſal.* 34. The more we are oppreſſed with Evil, the more he remembers us, *Pſalm.* 136.

Notwithſtanding our Childrens Imperfections and Miſcarriages, we cannot ſuffer to ſee them in Diſtreſs, but we are moved with Compaſſion, and perſwaded to help them according to our Ability; and ſhall thy God who loves thee more ſincerely, and more cordially than the beſt Fathers, and the moſt tender hearted Mothers, do their Children, forſake thee in the Day of Affliction. This merciful and Loving Father, who hath taken thee into his Protection, when thou didſt enter into the World, and who ſince hath furniſhed plentifully to all thy Neceſſities; ſhall he deny his gracious Aſſiſtance now in the Time of this thy Calamity? He who hath fulfilled his Praiſe by thy Mouth, when thou didſt ſuck at thy Mother's Breaſt; who hath crowned thy youthful Days with his Divine Bleſſings, will not forſake thee now in thine old Age. He will not caſt thee off in the laſt Moments of thy Life, when thy Strength is decayed, and thou art ſcarce able to help thy ſelf.

When we offer any Aſſiſtance to our ſick or wounded Friends, we labour to leſſen their Pain; we employ all our Skill, and diſcover our moſt excellent Secrets; at leaſt, we endeavour to make them ſenſible of our Diſpleaſure and Grief for their Diſtemper, by our Sighs and Tears, and by all good Offices. Their Complaints and Groans, are Darts that ſtrike us to the Heart: Likewiſe our merciful God is inſenſible of our Calamities; when he ſees us oppreſſed with grievous Pains, his Bowels yearn, his Heart is as it were moved, and his tender Love for us is concerned. In all our Afflictions he is afflicted; and whatſoever toucheth us, toucheth the very Apple of his Eye, *Hoſea.* 1. *Iſa.* 63. He is

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ſaid to weep and grieve at the Torments that we feel, and to be ſenſible of our Infirmities, *Luke* 2. He binds up our Wounds, and pours into them his Divine Balm; he cures the diſeaſed Heart, and cauſeth the bruiſed Bones to rejoyce, *Job* 5. He caſteth into our Beds of Sickneſs, his moſt excellent Perfumes, and drives from thence all Grief and Diſpleaſure. When a peſtilentious Fever hath ſeized upon you, this Heavenly Phyſician can give you ſome cordial Waters, powerful Antidotes, to keep the Poiſon from the Heart, *Jer.* 30. *Pſal.* 147. *Pſal.* 51. *Pſal.* 34. *Cant.* 1. His gracious Hand can drive from thy Soul the Venom with which the Old Serpent labours to infect it. He will, in thy Need, clap upon thy Head, thy Stomach, or rather to thine Heart, not a bleeding Pidgeon, but the liviug and cheriſhing Virtue of his Holy Spirit. Only diſcover to him the afflicted and diſeaſed Part or Member of thy Soul, or Body, and he ſhall anoint it with the Oyl of Joy and Gladneſs, that ſhall run down into thy Joints and Marrow. If thou feeleſt thy ſelf weak or fainting, ſay to him as the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, *Comfort my Heart with Wine*, Chap. 9. and he will not fail to preſent unto thee of the new Wine of his Kingdom. If thou art thirſty, ask him ſome Drink, and he will give thee of that Water, *which if a Man drink, he ſhall never be a thirſt.*

My Brother, or my Siſter, caſt thy ſelf upon God, for his Power is as great as his Love to thee. He underſtands better than thou or we can, what is expedient and good for thee. In his due time he will make thy Pains to ceaſe, and will pull out of thy Fleſh, its incommodious Thorns; either he will drive from thee the Spirit that afflicts thee, or accompliſh his Virtue in thine Infirmity. He will ſtrengthen thee in ſuch a manner, and with ſuch Patience, Conſtancy, and Faith, and fill thee with ſo much extraordinary Joy and Comfort, that every one ſhall viſibly perceive, that God himſelf is thy Help, and that his Virtue ſuſtains thee. O how ſweet and pleaſant is God's Aſſiſtance to a Chriſtian Soul!

Soul! It brings along with it so much Pleasure and admirable Delight; it causeth such undeniable Testimonies of our Predestination to appear; it gives us so many rare Fore-tastes of our Celestial Inheritance, that St. *Paul* prefers it not only to all the Pleasures and Honours of the World, but also to his being ravish'd into the third Heaven, and to his seeing unspeakable Things which cannot be uttered, 1 *Cor.* 12.

If Afflictions are increas'd with Christ, Joy and Comfort increase also with him. For as God commands Wine to be given to a Man whose Heart is oppressed with Sorrow, to drive away his Sadness, and bury his troubled Thoughts in Oblivion; thus in the greatest Evils, he supplies us with the strongest and most cordial Consolations. 'Tis on this Occasion that he declares his greatest Power, and pours out most plentifully his Divine Graces, *Isa.* 4. When thou should'st walk through the Flames, the Fire shall not burn nor touch thee. For as the Son of God was in the Furnace with *Daniel*'s three Companions in *Babylon*; Thus in thy most violent Fits of the Fever, in the Midst of thy most grievous Aches, he will satiate thy Soul, and thou shalt be like a Water'd Garden, *Dan.* 5. Or as a living Spring of Comfort, that can never be stop'd nor dried up. Let the Storms and Floods beat against thee, Let the Defluxions endeavour to choak thee, *Isa.* 58. thou mayst say with King *David*, *I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right Hand, I shall not be moved*, Psal. 19. When I should walk in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, when I should have no other Help, nor Assistance in the World, when no more Strength remains in my Body, I would not fear; for, *O God, thy Staff and thy Rod will comfort me*, Psal. 23. God will not only draw near to thy Sick Bed, but he will embrace and receive thee into his Protection, he will kiss thee with the Kisses of his Mouth, and make thee taste of the Sweetness of his divine Comforts, *Cant.* 1. He will cherish thee as a Mother doth her Child, to pacify it, and make thee

so

ſo ſenſible of his Love, that thou mayſt ſay with the Spouſe, *His left Hand is under my Head, and his right Hand doth embrace me.* With his gracious Hand he will wipe off thy cold Sweat, and into his Boſom he will receive thy Sighs and thy Groans; and thy Tears, he will gather up into his moſt precious Bottles. And as when Drops of Blood fell from him, the Holy Angels appeared to comfort him, *Luke* 22. thus in our greateſt and moſt difficult Encounters, when thou ſhalt be at Handy-blows with Death it ſelf, his faithful Miniſters, his Meſſengers, the Angels of his right Hand ſhall viſit thee, to ſupply thee with ſpiritual Comfort, 2 *Cor.* 5. *Rev.* 5. And when theſe earthly Comforters ſhall fail, he ſhall ſend to thee ſome of thoſe powerful Spirits that wait before his glorious Throne, *Dan.* 7. O good God, if we could but perceive the Things that are of themſelves inviſible, and if thou didſt but give us Eyes, like to thoſe of the holy Prophet, we ſhould perceive Legions of immortal Spirits flying about in the Houſes of Sorrow, with an intent to aſſiſt the Chriſtian Soul, *Iſa.* 6. 2 *Kings* 6. Finally, as the Sun with its Light, and the Strength of its Beams, drives away the thickeſt Clouds, and comforts with its delightful Countenance the Face of the whole Earth; thus Jeſus Chriſt, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, who carries Healing under his Wings, baniſheth all Sadneſs with the Light of his Divine Graces, *Mal.* 3. and with the Preſence of his Holy Spirit expels away the moſt ſenſible Griefs, and fills us with unſpeakable Joy, and with the Peace of God which paſſeth all Underſtanding.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Sick Person, who desires to prepare for Death.

O Almighty and Gracious God! The Author of Light and Darkness, and the wise Disposer of Good and Evil; I acknowledge and adore thy Hand, that hast cast me upon this sick Bed, to punish me for my Sins. I cannot complain of thy Justice, but rather I reverence thy Wisdom and Goodness. For I have deserved a severer Treatment at thine Hands, having abused thy Mercies, and misimployed my Strength and Health in pursuing after worldly Vanities and carnal Pleasures, more earnestly than after thy Glory or mine own Salvation. For which Neglect I am heartily sorry, and repent, and could willingly water this Couch with my Tears. O my God! thou knowest that this my Grief proceeds from a sincere Displeasure of having offended so gracious a Lord, who now in this Correction discoverest to me thy tender Compassion, in that thou rebukest me not in thy Wrath. I take this Distemper of Body, as a Testimony of thy paternal Love and Care, since this is thine ordinary Method of dealing with thy dearest Children. I doubt not but it will prove to mine eternal Advantage, in regard thou hast promised that, all Things shall work together for Good to them that love thee. *I am willing to suffer these Pains and Aches, so that they may advance thy Glory and my Salvation. I refer my self to thy wise Disposal; thou knowest what is most expedient for me; and I am sensible of thy Power to restore me to Life, and rescue me out of the Grave. Thy Blessing alone is able to give a healing Virtue to all these Potions, Medicines and* Recipe's *administred to me; but if it be thy Pleasure to continue this Disease, continue to me, I beseech thee, O my Redeemer! the inward Comforts and Assistances of thine Holy Spirit. Increase my Patience, Faith and Humility, that I may submit to thy Sacred Will. Remove from me all the Grief and Displeasure, that renders me uneasy, and fill my Soul with thy Peace, Joy, and Love; that now being separated from the Society of Men, I may lift up my Heart and*

Mind

Mind unto thee, my God! and withdraw them from theſe lower Vanities. Grant that I may employ theſe few Moments that thou affordeſt me, to prepare for my Departure, to take a Review of my former ſinful Life, to beg Pardon and repent, and to truſt upon thine eternal Mercy by a lively Faith, that I may lay hold on thy Salvation, and be able to ſpeak with David, My Soul ſhall be ſatisfied as with Marrow and Fatneſs, and my Mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful Lips, when I remember thee upon my Bed and meditate on thee in the night Watch. *My Sickneſs ſeems tedious, but my Sins have continued longer, and all this bodily Pain and Grief is nothing in compariſon of the Happineſs that I expect in Heaven. For what are thoſe momentary Sufferings in reſpect of the everlaſting Joys? Grant I beſeech thee, that this Diſtemper of Body may turn to the Health and Safety of my Soul, and may oblige me to conſecrate the Reſidue of my Life to thy Service and to thy Glory; that I may be wean'd from the World, and reſign my ſelf into thine Hands; that Chriſt may be Gain unto me both in Life and in Death. But if it be thy Will to put a Period to my Sorrows and Sufferings by Death, here I am, O God! ready to obey thy Motion, and Will, without the leaſt Reſiſtance or Diſpleaſure. For my troubleſome Abode, undermin'd by Sickneſs, cauſeth me to wiſh for my Departure. My Soul is willing to forſake this infirm Body; for thou haſt prepared for it a more laſting and a glorious Dwelling above. This Couch where I am now ſtretch'd, minds me of the cold Grave where I muſt ſhortly reſt, and this Death that draws nearer and nearer to me, will free me from this Chain of Miſery, put an End to all my Grievances, and lead me out of this rotten Lodge, to introduce me into the glorious Palace of Immortality; where thy Divine Majeſty dwells, and where I ſhall for ever glorify thee in the Company of the Holy Angels and Sanctified Souls.* Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Sick Person tormented with violent Pains.

O *Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort! Look with an Eye of Pity upon my dreadful and sharp Sufferings. Thou piercest me thro' with thine Arrows, fillest my Soul with Bitterness; thy Wrath is kindled against me, and thou increasest my Sorrows and Pains, both by Night and by Day. Sure my Sins must be Extraordinary and Heinous, since they have provoked thee to deal so severely with me, who art Mercy it self, and art not willing to afflict the Sons of Men. O my God, consider my Weakness and Frailty, and let not thine Almighty Power, and the Fierceness of thy Wrath be display'd against such an infirm Creature as I am, a Worm of the Earth, Dust and Ashes, nothing in comparison of thee, O infinite Being! Remember that I am related to thee in thy blessed Son, and am thine adopted Child; vouchsafe me therefore thy favourable Assistance, to put an end to my Sorrows and Sufferings, that are so excessive and extraordinary, that I could willingly speak as* Jonas, Death is better to me than Life. *For I am wither'd as parched Ground in Summer, and a violent Heat consumes and tortures me. O when wilt thou, my God, who hast redeemed me from the Torments of Hell, rescue me out of these violent and bodily Pains. I will give a Check to these indecent Groanings and Complaints, that become not such a sinful Creature as I am. Thou art in this most Just and Righteous, but I must cover my Face with Shame and Confusion. For were thy Punishments far more grievous, were I cast into everlasting Flames, I could have no Cause to complain of thy Severity, by reason of my sinful Life. O my God! my Sufferings are great, but not to be compared with my Saviour's, when the cold Sweat and Drops of Blood fell from his precious Body. My Grief is violent, but not to be parallelled with the Glory that thou hast promised to thy chosen Servants. O merciful Saviour! Thine heavy Hand shall never hinder me from Trusting and Hoping in thee. I am perswaded that*

this

this ſevere dealing is deſign'd for my Good and Salvation, and in thine own Time, thou wilt take away from me this bitter Cup, that I may not drink up the Dregs. Nevertheleſs, not my Will, but thine be done. With this Affliction, grant me Grace and Strength to bear it patiently, and let thy Puniſhments be proportionable to my Weakneſs, and grant me a happy End and Iſſue, that neither Death nor Life, nor Pain nor Torment, may ever ſeparate me from thy Love, or pluck me out of thine Hand. My good God! Forſake me not in my Diſtreſs, but comfort and aſſiſt me, and put an end to this bitter Affliction. I am fainting, and my Soul is weary within me, vouchſafe to me thy Divine Conſolations, the Cordials of thy Holy Spirit. My Friends and Kindred grieve and weep for mine Affliction, but can give me no Aſſiſtance; Thou only art my Hope, thine Hand alone can relieve and deliver me from mine exceſſive Grief and Sufferings. Quench theſe violent Pains that conſume me, and remove me out of the Reach of Miſery. I cannot but long for Death, that will put a period to my Torments; releaſe me from mine Affliction, and wipe away all Tears from mine Eyes. O my God! When ſhall my Cryings and Groans be chang'd into Songs of Praiſe and Thankſgiving; when I ſhall be admitted to the Society of the Bleſſed, who are eſcaped out of all Tribulations, and have waſhed their Garments in the Blood of the Lamb. Draw me, and I ſhall run after thee, and glorifie thee for ever in thine Heavenly Temple, Amen.

CHAP. XIV.

The second Consolation against the Fears of Death, is to look upon God as a merciful Father, and to trust upon his Infinite Goodness.

THere is no Child well descended, but desires earnestly to see his Father's Face, and especially, the Face of a good and gracious Father. A great Prince's Son, who hath been brought up in a foreign Country, rejoiceth when his Father sends for him, to make him partake of the Glory and Dignity of his Empire. He is not then grieved nor troubled, he seeks not to delay his Departure, but rather embraceth, with Transports of Joy, the Messenger of such good News. He thinks of nothing but hastening his Journey. If he could borrow Wings he would fly with an unspeakable Swiftness to his Father's Palace. Now we are the Children of the great God, whose Throne is Heaven, and whose Footstool is the Earth. For our Faith that looks upon Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Redeemer, considers God as our God and Parent. For to them, who have received this only Son of the Father, hath been granted the Privilege of being the Sons of God; to them who believe in his Name, 1 *Joh.* 1. So that we have just Cause to be transported in an Holy Excess of Joy, with the Apostle St. *John, Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God,* 1 John 3.

We were by Nature Children of Wrath, as others; but God, who is rich in Mercy, hath predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will, *Eph.* 2. He gives us the Gracious Assurances of this free Adoption in this Life. For as we are Children, he hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts, to cry, *Abba,*

Abba, Father, Eph. 1. This Holy Spirit bears witneſs with our Spirits, that we are Children of God. If we be Children, then Heirs of God, and Co-heirs with Chriſt, *Gal.* 4. Yea, if we ſuffer with him, that we may be alſo glorified with him, *Rom.* 8. That we might be the Children of God, he hath not only adopted us by Jeſus Chriſt, but alſo regenerated us with incorruptible Seed. We are not born of Fleſh and Blood, but we are born of God. His infinite Goodneſs moved him firſt to grant us a Being, and his incomprehenſible Love hath inclin'd him to reform our Beings, and reprint his Divine Image in our Heart, *John* 1. 1 *Pet.* 1. He hath begotten us by his pure Grace, by the Word of his Truth, that we might be the Firſt-fruits of his Creatures, *Jam.* 1. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the Dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for us*, 1 Pet. 1.

Now tho' we be the Children of God, and the apparent Heirs of his Crown, our Glory and Dignity is not to be diſcerned during the Years of our earthly Pilgrimage. Our Heavenly Father ſuffers us here to live in a contemptible State in the Eyes of the World, that we might learn Humility, and long more earneſtly for his celeſtial Inheritance. As it happens in a dark and obſcure Midnight, Men tread under Feet Pearls, Diamonds, Sceptres and Crowns, as Duſt and Dung; thus now that a groſs Ignorance overſpreads the World, the Children of God, the moſt precious Jewels of his Crown, are eſteem'd no better than the Scum or the Filth of the Earth. This Conſideration cauſeth St. *John* to tell us, *Beloved we are now Children of God, it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be; but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 Joh. 3. As *David* ſent for *Abſalom* out of the *Philiſtines* Country, and gave him Leave to dwell in the City of *Jeruſalem*; but for the Space of two

Years he would not ſuffer him to enter his Royal Palace, or ſee his Face; Thus God hath freed us from the Devil's Tyranny, and Hell's Power, he hath admitted us into his Holy Church, which is as his *Jeruſalem*, where he gives us a Fore-taſte of our heavenly Peace and Reconciliation, but he delays for a time our Reception into the magnificent Palace of his Glory, and to the Enjoyment of his Divine Preſence, our higheſt Satisfaction, and greateſt Happineſs. While we remain in the Body, we are at a Diſtance from God, ſo that we are ſaved, but by Hope, 2 *Cor.* 5. But when we ſhall depart out of this Body, we ſhall be with the Lord, and ſhall enter into a real Fruition of his celeſtial Inheritance, *Rom.* 8. Finally, while we dwell here below, we may ſee the Image of our Heavenly Father, and behold his Face as in a Glaſs; but when he ſhall admit us near his Throne, we ſhall ſee him Face to Face, we ſhall be transformed into his Likeneſs, and be fully ſatisfied with his Reſemblance, *Rom.* 1. 1 *Cor.* 3. 1 *Cor.* 13. *Pſalm.* 17.

Let Death be never ſo frightful and ill-favour'd, 'tis the Meſſenger of our Heavenly Father; and if we can have the Confidence to open its Iron Hands, and look into them, we ſhall find gracious Letters, Full of Love, by which this Father of Mercy calls us to the full Enjoyment of our eternal Happineſs. Death not only invites us to God, but it ſerves as a Ship to convey us through this tempeſtuous Sea of the World, to our Redeemer, who expects our Coming at the Haven of everlaſting Reſt. 'Tis like *Elijah*'s Chariot of Fire that carried him up to Heaven, 1 *Kings* 2. If Death covers our Eyes with one Hand, and deprives us of the Light of the Sun with the other, it rends in pieces that Veil, which hinders us from the Sight of the Excellencies of God's immortal Sanctuary, and diſcovers to us the Glorious Face of the Father of Light. With the one it digs for our Bodies a Grave to caſt them in, but with the other Hand it flings open, for our Souls, the Gates of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, to introduce them into the banquetting Hall. There-

Therefore Death ſhould be ſo far from frighting us, that its Arrival ſhould rather comfort us, and cauſe us to reſolve to follow it with an holy Chearfulneſs. For we ſhould not only be willing to go to God with Tranſports of Joy, when he is pleaſed to call us to behold his Face, and to eat of the Bread of eternal Life in his heavenly Kingdom; but of our own accord we ſhould be impatient to enjoy his Glorious Preſence, and in a continual longing to ſee that happy Day that ſhall bring us to him, and ſatisfie us with unſpeakable Delights. A true Chriſtian ſhould be moved in this Occaſion, with *David*'s Spirit; *As the Hart panteth after the Water Brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee, O God, My Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God; when ſhall I come and appear before God?*

I confeſs, that this great God, before whom we are to appear, is cloathed with Glory and Majeſty, and dwells in the Light which no Man can approach unto, 1 *Tim.* 6. I know that he ſits upon a dreadful Throne of Fire, whereof the Wheels are like a burning Flame, *Dan.* 7. That a thouſand Thouſands wait upon him, and ten thouſand Millions ſtand before him, *Iſa.* 6. I am not ignorant, that at his Preſence the Earth is moved, the Sea and the Rivers dry up, the Mountains tremble, and the little Hills ſhake, the Rocks ſhrink, the Pillars of Heaven fail, and the Seraphims cover themſelves with their Wings, *Revel.* 4. But let not this dreadful Majeſty, and Heavenly Pomp terrifie thee, O believing Soul, for this great God is full of a Fatherly Affection for thee. Round about this Throne of God there is a beautiful Rainbow, of a green Colour, like to an Emerald, to ſignifie, that God is reconciled, and that the Covenant of our Peace is to continue for ever. As out of this magnificent Throne, proceed Thunders and Thunderbolts, that fright the Worldlings, and caſt the proud Souls down to the Ground; ſo from thence proceed alſo Lightnings, and ſuch refreſhing Flames, as are able to comfort the Believer, and to direct him to his celeſtial Inheritance. We are related

related to God more than the Angels and Seraphims; for we are not only his Creatures and Servants, but also his Children, and the Members of his Son; nay, we are but one with him, *Joh.* 17. Let us therefore return our hearty Thanks to our Heavenly Father, who hath made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, *Colos.* 1.

Let us go up with Confidence to Mount *Sion*, for there are no Signs of God's Wrath nor of his just Vengeance to be seen. We shall find no Boundaries to keep us off from God, but we shall find Assurances of Love to invite and unite us unto him. We shall see no Fire to devour and scare us, but we shall perceive the comfortable Flames, which burn without consuming, and which bring Consolation rather than Fear. We shall not meet there a terrible Law-giver to drive us from him, to terrifie us with his Thunderbolts; but we shall meet a loving Father to embrace and open to us the Bosom of his tender Compassion. In short, we shall not hear there the terrible Sound of the Trumpet, that causeth the Rocks to split asunder, that flings to the Ground the proud Cedars, and makes the Deer cast their Young; but we shall hear the sweet and melodious Voice, that will quiet our trembling Souls, refresh our languishing Spirits, and fill us with Peace and eternal Consolation, *Heb.* 12.

I acknowledge that God is just, but he is also merciful, and his Mercy rejoiceth over Judgment. His Justice is like an exceeding High Mountain, but his Mercy may be compared to the bottomless Deep, *Psal.* 39. Therefore *Moses*, who had seen God more than any living Man, cannot be satisfied to extol and magnifie his infinite Mercy, and the overflowing Riches of his Love, *Psal.* 39. He names him but once, *Just*; but many times he calls him *Merciful*, *Gracious*, *Long-suffering*, *abundant in Goodness and Truth*, Exod. 34. 'Tis not unworthy of our Observation, that the Words *Righteous* or *Just*, attributed to God, often signifie also *Merciful*, *Gracious* and *Loving*, in the Holy Tongue. 'Tis true,

true, God holds in his Hand the Sword of his Juſtice, but he is girded, and cloathed with his Mercy, as with a Garment. In ſhort, God is not only Good and Merciful, but he is alſo Goodneſs and Mercy it ſelf, 1 *Joh.* 4. His Compaſſion and Tenderneſs is far greater than that of the beſt Fathers and Mothers, as he himſelf declares by the Prophet, *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have Compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the Palm of my Hand, yea, in the Bottom of my Heart*, Iſa. 49. Theſe Fatherly Compaſſions force him to let fall the Sword of his Juſtice, as he tells us in *Hoſea*, *How ſhall I make thee as* Admah? *How ſhall I ſet thee as* Zeboim? *Mine Heart is turned with in me, my Repentings are kindled together, I will not execute the Fierceneſs of mine Anger*, Chap. 11. Therefore *David* had good cauſe to be perſuaded, *That tho' his Father and Mother ſhould forſake him, the Lord would receive him.* If all Love, Kindneſs, and Mercy were totally baniſhed out of the Earth; and all natural Affections ſhould be extinct, my God will not forſake me while I live, and at the Hour of Death will receive me into his Boſom, and cover me with his Wings. Chriſtian Souls, let not the ſad Remembrance of your former Sins and Miſcarriages diſcourage you. For when we appear before the Throne of God's Majeſty, we muſt not truſt upon our own Righteouſneſs, nor be puft up with the Fancy of our Merits; but we muſt place all our Aſſurance and Hope, in the Mercy of God alone. We muſt imitate *Daniel*, who ſpeaks thus of himſelf, and of his Proceedings, *We do not preſent our Supplications before thee for our Righteouſneſs, but for thy great Mercies*, Dan. 9. The Compaſſions of God are our Merits. While God hath Store of Compaſſions, we ſhall not want Merits, St. *Bern.* Now God's Mercies and Compaſſions can never fail; they renew every Morning; his Faithfulneſs is very excellent, *Lam.* 3. *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no Pleaſure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Ways*

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and live, Ezek. 33. *I am he, I am he that blots out all thy Sins for mine own sake, and will not remember thy Transgressions*, Isa. 45. Tho' our Sins and Iniquities appear to you with all the Deformity and Uglineſs of Hell, be not overcome with Grief, nor caſt your ſelves into Deſpair. Let us rather ſay with the Prophet *Jeremiah, Wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man for the Puniſhment of his Sins? Let us ſearch and try our Ways, and turn again unto the Lord. Let us lift up our Heart with our Hands unto God in the Heavens.* Or let us ſpeak in the Language of *Micah, Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and paſſeth by the Trvnſgreſſions of the Remnant of his Heritage? He retaineth not his Anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in Mercy. He will come again, he will have compaſſion upon us, he will ſubdue our Iniquities, and thou wilt caſt out their Sins into the Depths of the Sea*, Micah 7. Let us comfort our ſelves with the Words of the Prophet *Daniel, to the Lord our God belong Mercies and Forgiveneſſes, tho' we have rebelled againſt him*, Dan. 7.

Tell me not again, I know that God is Good and Merciful, but my Sins are too many to believe that he will vonchſafe me a Pardon, and have Mercy upon me. And after many repeated Vows, after many Groans, Sighs, and Tears of Repentance, I have returned as the Dog to his Vomit, and as the Swine to wallow in the Mire, 2 *Pet.* 2. But, wretched Sinner, learn for thy Comfort, that if thy Sins ſhould be as many as the Sand by the Sea-ſhore, or as the Stars of the Sky, *Iſa.* 44. if thou doſt now ſincerely repent of them, with a contrite Soul, God will blot them out as the Cloud, and will caſt them into the Sea. For God's Mercy hath no Bounds, and his Compaſſions are infinite, *Micah* 7. When thy Brother hath offended thee, if he ask Forgiveneſs, the Lord commands that thou ſhouldſt pardon him, not only ſeven times, but ſeventy and ſeven times, *Matth.* 17. How much more Reaſon haſt thou to believe, that God, who is Goodneſs and Mercy, will pardon thee

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more Sins and oftner? Therefore inſtead of examining thy Miſcarriages, accept of the precious Balm of his divine Conſolations, and ſay with the Royal Prophet, *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bleſs his Holy Name; bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits, who forgiveth all thine Iniquities; who healeth all thy Diſeaſes, who redeemeth thy Life from Deſtruction; who crowneth thee with loving Kindneſſes and tender Mercies, who ſatisfieth thy Mouth with good Things, ſo that thy Youth is renewed like the Eagles. The Lord executeth Righteouſneſs and Judgment, for all that are oppreſſed; the Lord is merciful and gracious, ſlow to Anger, and plenteous in Mercy, he will not always chide, neither will he keep his Anger for ever; he hath not dealt with us after our Sins, nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities; for as the Heaven is high above the Earth, ſo great is his Mercy towards them that fear him; as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath he removed our Tranſgreſſions from us. Like as a Father pitieth his Children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him*, Pſal. 103.

Don't anſwer me, that your Sins are ſo heinous and abominable, that you cannot expect a Pardon. For when they ſhould be as high as the proudeſt Mountains, if thou art really ſenſible of their Weight, if they make thee to ſigh and groan, God's infinite Mercy, like a Deluge, ſhall cover and waſh them away, *Lam.* 5. or like a Torrent, it ſhall tranſport them out of his Sight; for where Sin abounds, God's Grace will ſuper-abound, in Caſe there be true Repentance, *Iſa.* 1. Tho' your Sins ſhould be as Scarlet, they ſhall be as white as Snow; tho' they ſhould be as red as Vermilion, they ſhall become as white as Wooll. All the Offences that you are guilty of ſince you were in the World, are finite and limited, but God's Mercy is infinite. *O Lord, if thou ſhouldſt mark Iniquities, who ſhall ſtand? but there is Forgiveneſs with thee, that thou mayſt be feared*, Pſal. 130.

He that hides his Tranſgreſſions, ſhall not proſper, but he that confeſſeth and forſakes them, ſhall obtain Mercy, *Prov.* 18. 'Tis certain, that there is no Sinner

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ever so guilty, that shall seek to God's Mercy, by a true Repentance, bnt shall obtain his Request, *Psal.* 113. *David* had defiled himself with an infamous Adultery, and imbrued his Hands in the Blood of one of his most faithful Servants; but as soon as he had made request to God with a broken Heart, and a contrite Spirit, his good and merciful Creator cleansed this foul Sinner from all his Guilt, at the Fountain of his infinite Mercy. He made him whiter than Snow, and comforted his bruised Bones. This Consideration caused him to cry out, *I said I will confess unto God my Transgressions; and thou, O God, hast taken away the Punishment of my Sin.* King *Manasseh* had been addicted to deviliſh Arts, and to the most abominable and heinous Idolatries, 2 *Chron.* 33. Nevertheless, as soon as he sigh'd in his Chains, his Prayers and his Groans found a gracious Reception at the Throne of Grace. The poor Publican in the Gospel being ashamed to lift up his Eyes to Heaven, struck upon his Breast with this Expression of his penitent Soul, *God, be merciful to me a Sinner*, Luke 18. And God look'd upon him with an Eye of Mercy, and stretched out unto him his gracious Hand, so that he departed to his Home justified. The penitent *Magdalen* was inwardly grieved at her former filthy and debauched Behaviour, so that she came and cast her self at our Saviour's Feet, watering them with her Tears, and wiping them with the Hair of her Head, *Luk.* 9. but Christ soon lifted her up with these comfortable Words, *Thy Sins are pardoned, thy Faith hath saved thee, go in Peace.* St. *Peter*, by Frailty, that should cause the best Christians to tremble for fear of falling into the same Apostacy, denied his Lord and Master three times, with Cursing and Swearing, *Matth.* 26. But this merciful God looked upon him with an Eye of Compassion, and gave him Grace to repent most bitterly of such a foul Crime. I doubt not, but at the same Time, that this wretched Sinner poured forth his Tears in God's Presence; he poured into his Heart the Oyl of Joy and Gladness, and comforted him most effectually by

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his Divine Spirit. Likewiſe, tho' your Sins be never ſo grievous and abominable, if your Souls be toucht with Diſpleaſure, if your Hearts be truly penitent, ſo that you ſhed ſincere Tears of Repentance; in caſe you are heartily ſorry for the Want of a ſufficient Grief for your Sins, in caſe you proſtrate your ſelves before your Heavenly Father, he will raiſe you up again by his infinite Goodneſs, he will caſt all your Sins and Tranſgreſſions behind him; he will cry unto you inwardly, by the Voice of his Holy Spirit. *My Son*, or *my Daughter, thy Sins are forgiven thee*, John 5. He will fill your Souls with an unſpeakable Joy, *Luke* 9. and will cauſe you to ſing with the Pſalmiſt, *Bleſſed is he whoſe Tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe Sin is covered. Bleſſed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth no Iniquity, and in whoſe Spirit there is no Guile*, Pſal. 32. Finally, think not that 'tis ever too late to repent, and when Death is upon your Lips, that 'tis no Time to ſeek to the Mercy of God. As the Buſineſs of Repentance cannot be too ſoon, becauſe we know not when God will call us to himſelf; 'tis moſt certain, that it can never be too late. For at what Time or Seaſon ſoever the poor Sinner melts into Tears of Repentance, in caſe his Repentance be real, and his Tears proceed from a penitent Heart, God will always have the Arms of his Mercy wide open to receive him. The Thief crucified at our Saviour's Side, was at the laſt Gaſp when he was converted, and when he uttered this excellent Expreſſion; *Remember me, Lord, when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom*, Luk. 23. Our good and merciful Saviour granted his Requeſt, and encouraged him with the moſt excellent and comfortable Promiſe that could be expected; *Verily, I ſay unto thee, to day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* In like manner, when thou art at the Point of Death, if God ſpeaks to thee, and awakens thy Conſcience, 'tis an infallible Sign, that he hath Compaſſion on thee, and that he will not deſtroy thee. 'Tis a Sign that he opens for thee his Heaven, full of Light and Glory, and offers to thee his Paradiſe, with

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all its divine Excellencies. Doubt not, penitent Sinner, but that this is the acceptable Day, the Day of Salvation, and the Time of God's good Pleaſure. Since this good God draws ſo near thee, thou mayſt with freedom draw near him: And ſince he beats and knocks at the Door of thine Heart, 'tis an infallible Token, that thou may'ſt alſo beat at the Door of his eternal Mercies, and that he intends to open to ſatisfie thee. In ſhort, at what Hour ſoever we go to God, and appear before his Throne, he ſtretcheth out to us the Golden Scepter of his Favour, that we ſhould obtain Mercy, and find Grace, to be helped in time of need.

Long and elaborated Speeches or Prayers are needleſs to perſwade God to vouchſafe his Grace and ſeaſonable Help in ſuch an urgent Neceſſity. 'Tis not neceſſary that we ſhould compoſe them, with the Art and Induſtry of humane Wiſdom. We need but pray to God, as unto our Father, and weep in his Boſom; we need but open to him our Hearts, and call our ſelves his Children. That alone is ſufficient to move him to Compaſſion, and to ſtir up his fatherly Affections, to appeaſe his Anger, and to draw upon us his moſt excellent Bleſſings. The Prophet *Iſaiah*, the moſt eloquent of the Men of his time, ſeeks no other Argument to perſwade God to have Mercy and Compaſſion, but this, *Look down from Heaven, and behold from the Habitation of thy Holineſs, and of thy Glory, where is thy Zeal and thy Strength, the Sounding of thy Bowels, and of thy Mercies towards me? Are they reſtrained? Doubtleſs, thou art our Father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Iſrael *acknowledgeth us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy Name is from Everlaſting*, Iſa. 63. Likewiſe, after he had made this Confeſſion, *We are all as an unclean Thing, and all our Righteouſneſſes are as filthy Rags; and we all do fade as a Leaf, and our Iniquities like the Wind have taken us away, and there is none that calleth upon thy Name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold of thee, for thou haſt hid thy Face from us, and haſt conſumed*

conſumed us, becauſe of our Iniquities. Chap. 64. He adds, *but now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are thy Clay, and thou art our Potter, and we all are the Work of thine Hand. Be not wroth very ſore, O Lord, neither remember Iniquity for ever, behold, ſee, we beſeech thee, we are all thy People.*

By this gracious and loving Title of Father, the prodigal Son is perſwaded to be able to oblige his Parent to have Compaſſion on him; *I will riſe, and go to my Father, and will ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and againſt thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son; make me as one of thy hired Servants.* Thus, though we have forſaken our heavenly Father, miſpent the Riches of his Grace, and liv'd a filthy and a prophane Life; nevertheleſs, if we can be moved with a ſerious and a true Repentance, and ſay to him from our Heart, *Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and againſt thee, I am no more worthy to be called thy Son;* He will forget all the Miſcarriages of our Youth, and will paſs by all the Offences that we have committed out of Ignorance or Miſtake; nay, he will blot out all our wilful and deliberate Sins; he will not only embrace us when we ſhall caſt our ſelves at his Feet, and in the Arms of his Mercy, but he will meet and receive us as his deareſt Children. He will kiſs us with the bleſſed Kiſſes of his fatherly Love. He will give to us his holy Spirit, that ſhall ſeal us for the Day of Redemption, and ſhall aſſure us that we are admitted to the Liberty, and all the Privileges of his Children. He will ſhooe our feet with the Preparation of the Goſpel of Peace, and will vouchſafe us all the Aſſurance of our intire and perfect Reconciliation. He will cloath us here upon Earth with Robes of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, and in Heaven he will beſtow upon us incorruptible Robes of Immortality and Glory. In this Life he will give us the Fore-taſts of eternal Happineſs, and in the Life to come, he will lead us by the Hand into the Banqueting-Chamber, and will cauſe us to ſit

there a Table with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and with all the First-born, whose Names are written in Heaven. Out of this celestial Abode, all Murmurings and Complaints shall be banished; but here shall be Rejoycing and Gladness for the Conversion of poor Sinners, and for their Admittance into the Kingdom of Heaven. God himself shall invite the Holy Angels, and blessed Spirits to share in these publick Rejoycings, saying to them, *We must rejoyce, for these my Children were dead, but now they are alive; they were lost, but now they are found again.*

Let the miserable Slaves of the Devil, and of their filthy Lusts, tremble at the Approaches of Death, and let them look upon God as a dreadful Judge, *Rom.* 2. For our parts, we have not the Spirit of Bondage to be again in Fear; but we have the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba*, *Father*. Let the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*, who have no other Being nor Life, but that which they have received with their corrupt Nature, fly from God's Presence. For our parts, we that are regenerated by the Spirit of the second *Adam*, will draw near to him with Boldness. We will not say as that Soul, disturbed and frighted at the Consideration of its Crime, *I heard thy Voice, I was afraid, and hid my self*, Gen. 3. But rather, having been brought up in the Schools of the Prophets and Apostles, and having learn'd that we must prefer our Obedience to God's Will, to all other Things whatsoever; we shall say to him, with *Samuel*, *Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth*, 1 Sam. 8. Or rather, we will address our selves to him in plainer Terms, O my God and Heavenly Father, speak when thou wilt, for thy Servant is ready, and resolved to obey thy Command. We will not stay till God shall call the fourth time, as that Holy Man, 1 *Sam.* 3. who because of his tender and unexperienc'd Years, could not distinguish between God's Voice, and that of a Man; but we will have our Ears always open to his divine Orders, and at the first motion and Summons of his Will, we shall be ready to follow

follow him, as the Children of *Iſrael* were in the Wilderneſs, when they raiſed their Camp, and marched at his Motion, *Numb.* 3.

And as when the Levites ſtopt, and put down the Ark in its Place, 2 *Chron.* 3. *Moſes* uttered this Prayer, *O Lord, give Reſt to the thouſands of Iſrael*; likewiſe, you believing Souls, whom God hath choſen for his Ark and Temple, as ſoon as you ſhall perceive that this wiſe Governour of Mankind intends to put a Period to your painful Journey and laborious Race; that is to ſay, as ſoon as you ſhall perceive the leaſt Sign of Death, ſpeak with an holy Confidence and Joy; Rejoyce, O my Soul, the Time of thy Freedom, and of thine eternal Reſt approacheth. Here is the Meſſenger of good News. Here is Death that will uſher me into the glorious Palace of my Heavenly Father. Father, the Hour is come, glorifie thy Son, that thy Son may glorifie thee, *John* 17.

When the Hour was come that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was to go out of the World to the Father; he ſaid to his Diſciples, who were grieved for his Departure from them, *If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, becauſe I ſaid I go unto the Father; for the Father is greater than I*, Joh. 13. John 14. Chriſtian Souls, ſpeak in this manner at the Hour of your Departing. If ſuch as are about you happen to weep and lament, if they endeavour to move and ſtop you, by the Conſiderations of Fleſh and Blood; ſay unto them, Why are you grieved at my Deliverance, and at the End of my Miſery? Why would ye hinder and retard my Glory and Happineſs? O how cruel is your Love! How blind and inconſiderate is your Affection! Certainly, if ye did love me as ye ought, ye would prefer my Satisfaction, and the Accompliſhment of my Happineſs, to the ſmall Advantages that ye gather from my Abode with you. Ye ſhould conſider, that the leaſt Part of the Joy that I ſhall feel in my Heavenly Father's Houſe, is a thouſand Times more worth than all the Pleaſures of the Earth, than the Honours of the Age, and the Pomp

and Glory of the World. My Friends, or rather my Enemies, let me go, for I go to my Father, I go to behold his Face which is the most divine Satisfaction; I go to take Possession of that Inheritance prepared for me from the Foundations of the World, *Joh.* 20. *Matth.* 21.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who prepares himself for Death, by relying on the Mercy of God the Father.

My God and Creator, I perceive by the Symptoms of Death, that my Departure is at hand, and I am summon'd to appear before they dreadful Tribunal. The Remembrance of my former heinous Sins, cannot but terrifie me, when I view my self Dust and Ashes, and thine Infinite Being and Divine Perfections: When I compare my Weakness and Guilt with thy superlative Excellency and Holiness; how can I, who am but as Straw and Stubble, stand before a consuming Fire. If I should see thee, O my God! upon thy glorious Throne surrounded with Millions of immortal Spirits, arm'd with Thunderbolts, and encompassed with Flames of Fire, like to those of Mount Sinai, *I should not only tremble for Fear, but fall into Despair, and fly from thee, as my First Parent, or as* Moses *and* Isaiah, *be dismay'd and deplore my unclean Nature, not fit to draw near so Holy a God. But O merciful Father! thy glorious Presence is not without some Tokens of Mercy. I see a Rainbow round about thy Throne, an assurance of my Peace and Reconciliation. I dare therefore draw near the Throne of thy Grace, from whence thou reacheſt to me the Scepter of thine infinite Goodness, and speakest to me in a Language full of Love and Compassion to comfort me, to revive my drooping Spirits, and fill me full of Hope, and Confidence of my future Happiness and Salvation. Since therefore I see about thee, O my God! no such terrible Mark of thy Wrath, I will no longer yield to the Spirit of Bondage, that inclines to Fear; but I will be perswaded by*

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the Spirit of Adoption, to cry unto thee, Abba, Father. For I am thy Child, and Co-heir with thy bleſſed Son, who hath reconciled me to thee, by the Blood of his Croſs, when I ſtood as an Enemy at a diſtance. But now that I am ſo nearly related to thee, wilt thou refuſe me mine Inheritance, purchaſed for me by my Chriſt? O Heavenly Father! I know my Offences are heinous; and if thou didſt treat me with Severity and Juſtice, I ſhould expect nothing but the eternal Flames. But I am aſſured thou doſt not delight in the Death of Sinners, and haſt promiſed to accept of my penitent Tears, and Amendment. And tho' my Sins be many and grievous; O let thy Grace and Mercy be magnified in the Pardon of them. I am perſwaded that thy Compaſſion will receive and embrace me, as a Father his afflicted Child, and put far from thee mine Offences. Return then unto thy Reſt, O my Soul! for the Lord is gracious unto thee, and is ready to admit thee into his eternal Kingdom. I underſtand therefore Death's Summons to be the Voice of my Lord and Father, who calls and commands me to come unto him. I will follow the Example of the prodigal Son, and ſpeak in his Language; Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and againſt thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son. *I confeſs, O my God! that thou haſt not been ſparing of thy manifold Bleſſings to me, but I have not employed them as I ought to thy Honour and Glory. The Temptations of the World have too much prevailed upon me, and my wicked Inclinations have drawn me away from thy Service, to gratifie the Corruption of my Nature. In this ſinful State that I am in, I fly to thee for Mercy and Pardon. Have Compaſſion on me, my Heavenly Father, whoſe tenderneſs for me, far exceeds that of the moſt tender hearted Parents. I am fully perſuaded, that thou wilt not reject me, but art ready to embrace and meet me on the way, as the Father of the prodigal Son. O unparallel'd Love! O infinite Goodneſs! I am confident to find in thee, my God, and to be a Partaker of it! I doubt not but that thou wilt quiet my troubled Spirit with a gracious Reception, cloath me with the Robe of thy Righteouſneſs, and entertain me in thy glorious Palace, where I ſhall be admitted to ſolemnize the Marriage of the Lamb, deſign'd as an Offering from the Foun-*

dation of the World, in the happy Society of Angels and immortal Spirits, where we shall glorifie thee, and be everlasting Monuments of thine infinite Goodness and Mercy. O admirable Wisdom in disposing of thine Elect! We were lost Creatures, but we shall be all found in God. We were dead in our Sins; but by Death, which we had drawn upon our selves, we shall return to Life. We were cast into the most miserable state, but thereby we shall attain and be advanced to the highest Felicity. O my God! I recommend unto thee my Soul as to a faithful Creator. Heavenly Father, into thy Hands I remit my Spirit. Amen.

CHAP. XV.

The third Consolation against the Fears of Death, is to meditate continually on the Death and Sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to trust upon the Merits of his Cross.

IF we desire to die with a peaceable and quiet Mind, we must always meditate on the Death and Sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and rest upon the Merits of his Cross. For the Death of this Prince of Life is the Model of ours, and the Fountain of Comforts and Joys of a believing Soul.

1. By looking upon this perfect Example, the Wonder of Men and Angels, we learn to endure, with an holy Resolution and Patience, all the Evils and Pains that attend upon Death, *Luk.* 22. For tho' our Saviour's Torments were excessive, so that his Soul was sorrowful unto Death, tho' there issued out of his innocent Body a bloody Sweat, from the Violence of his Grief; yet out of his Mouth came not forth the least Sign of Repining or Impatience, *Isa.* 53. He was led to the Slaughter as a Lamb, and as a Sheep before the Shearers is dumb.

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2. From hence we learn, that the laſt Hours of our Life, muſt be employed in fervent and continual Prayers to God, ſince this beloved of the Father, offers to him at ſuch a Time his Prayers and Supplications, with ſtrong Crying, and a Flood of Tears, as to him who was able to deliver him from Death, *Heb.* 5. In the Boſom of this Heavenly Father, he poureth out all his Grief, and three times he preſents this Requeſt, *Father, if this Cup may not paſs away from me, except I drink it, &c.*

3. We learn alſo to preſent our ſelves before God's Divine Majeſty with Humility, and to reſign our ſelves wholly to his adorable Providence; he who thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, he whom the Millions of Angels, and Seraphims worſhip continually, judg'd it no Diſgrace to himſelf to fall upon his Knees three times to the Ground, and ſubmit his Will to that of his Heavenly Father. For after that he had ſaid, *Father if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs away from me*, He adds theſe Words, *Nevertheleſs, O Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt*, Matth. 26.

4. If at the Time of our Death, an exceſſive Sorrow, or a malignant Humour ſeize upon our Minds, and hinder us from ſeeing the Heavens open, or God who ſtretcheth out his Arms to receive us into his Reſt; Let us remember that this merciful Lord ſpeaks to us, as he did to his three Apoſtles, who ſlept when he was in his Agony, *Cannot you watch one hour with me? Matth.* 26. My dear Children, 'tis no Time to fall aſleep with the fooliſh Virgins, trim your Lamps, put on the Garments of Light, to meet your Celeſtial Bridegroom, and to enter with him into the Marriage Chamber, *Matth.* 25.

5. God requires that we ſhould do as much Good at all times to our Friends as we are able, and to expreſs the Sincerity of our Affections to thoſe to whom Nature and Religion have cauſed us to be related. But chiefly at the Hour of Death we are more bound to this religious Duty. Therefore Jeſus Chriſt hath

shewn us an excellent Example; for when he was nailed to the Cross, and ready to breath forth his Soul into the Hands of his Heavenly Father, he took care of his Holy and Blessed Mother, saying to his beloved Disciple, *My Son, behold thy Mother*, and to her, *Woman, behold thy Son.*

6. We ought to do Good, and shew Kindness not only to our Friends, but also forgive our greatest Enemies, such as are the most enraged against us. For by this means we shall follow the blessed Footsteps of our Gracious Saviour; for he had Compassion upon them that crucified him and mocked him. *Father*, said he, *forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

7. By the Cross of Jesus Christ, we learn to put our Trust in the Goodness of God in our sharpest Pains, and to embrace him as our most loving Father and Redeemer, at that Instant when he seems to discover to us a severe Countenance, full of Wrath. For this Eternal Son of God, in his most violent Tortures, when his Heavenly Father withdrew from him his Aid and Assistance, and withheld the Effects of his Grace, the Expressions of his Love, and the Comforts of his Divine Spirit: yet he lookt upon him as his God, and prays to him with an Holy Assurance repeating these Words, *My God, my God!*

8. If we will die willingly, and leave these infirm Bodies with a joyful Mind, when the Time is come, that we must go to the Father of Spirits, we ought to remember with what Resolution our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ prepar'd himself for Death, and how willingly he commended his innocent Soul into the Hands of God his Father, when he required it. *No Man taketh my Life away from me, but I lay it down of my self; I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again; this Commandment have I received of my Father*, John 10. Heb. 10. This caused him to speak in this manner, *Here I am, O God, to do thy Will*, Luk. 23. Therefore, when he gave up the Ghost, he cried with a loud Voice, to shew that his precious Soul was not taken from

from him by Violence, but that he willingly offered it up as a Sacrifice to God.

9. In this excellent Deſcription of Chriſt crucified, we may farther learn, what ſhould be our laſt Words, and our laſt Thoughts. For if God grants us the Uſe of our Tongues until the laſt Moment, we cannot end our Life more comfortably, than by ſuch Expreſſions as our Saviour made uſe of upon the Croſs; *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit.* But if we cannot move our Lips, nor pronounce theſe Words, we ought to have them inwardly in our Minds, and expreſs them with the Motions of the Heart.

10. In looking exactly into the Death and Paſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we may eaſily find how much we are engag'd to yield up our Souls to God, when he is pleas'd to call for them. For this bleſſed Death is the Price and Ranſom that he hath paid for them. Now if it be reaſonable to render unto every one that which he hath bought and purchaſed with a great Price; and if it would be a great Injuſtice to refuſe unto any Man that which he hath paid for with the Blood of his only and beloved Son, how can we refuſe our Souls unto God, ſince they belong to him? becauſe he hath not only created them, and ſtamped in them his Image, but hath alſo purchaſed them with the Blood of his only Son, in whom, from all Eternity he is well pleaſed. We muſt not therefore imitate the Example of evil Paymaſters, or unjuſt Poſſeſſors of other Men's Goods, we muſt not expect, until our Souls be pluck'd from us by violence, but rather like the good and righteous Debtors, we ought to return them willingly, and yield them up into his Hands, who hath paid for them an infinite and an unvaluable Ranſom. *David* was of this Mind, when he ſaid, *Into thine Hand I commit my Spirit; thou haſt redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth,* Pſal. 31.

11. From this Death and Paſſion of our glorious Redeemer, we underſtand, not only our Duty, but alſo find ſufficient Grounds of Comfort and Hope; and if

I may so say, 'tis in the Bowels of this dead Lion, that we meet with the sweetest and most ravishing Consolations. This Chief Priest who bears us upon his Breast in his heavenly Sanctuary, or rather in his Heart, will not forsake us in the Day of our Distress, nor yield us up to the Fears and Pangs of Death. For since he hath encountred with this cruel Enemy, since he hath felt its Stings, its Shiverings and Pains, and hath been tempted as we have been in all things, except to Sin; he is merciful and faithful, to have Compassion of our Infirmities; he is no less able to assist us in our Temptations, and to make us in all things more than Conquerours.

12. Believing Souls, consider with me the noble Expressions of St. *Paul*, *Blessed be God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, who comforteth us in all our Tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any Trouble, by the Comfort wherewith we our selves are comforted of God*, 2 Cor. These excellent Truths may be very well applied to our Lord Jesus Christ, whom the Holy Ghost names, *The Apostle and High Priest of our Profession*, Heb. 3. For the comfortable Assistances which he hath received from God, in the time of his greatest Anguish, are precious Tokens, and infallible Assurances of God's future Help in our Need. For as when he was in his bitter Agony, when his Soul was cast down with a deadly Sorrow, an Angel from Heaven came to comfort him; so likewise, when we shall be engaged in an Encounter with Death, when it shall endeavour to fill our Souls with Sadness and Apprehensions, he will, doubtless, send to us some of his good Angels, that be at his right Hand, I mean, the faithful Teachers of his Holy Word; or else he will send from Heaven some of his blessed Spirits that stand about his Throne, who are commonly employed in the Assistance of the Faithful. The Holy Ghost himself, the Comforter of afflicted Souls, and the true Oyl of Gladness, will then drive from our Hearts all Grief, and revive us with his heavenly Comforts. He

will

will not forſake us, until he hath brought us to the Head-Spring of eternal Joy and Comfort.

13 Our Lord and Saviour's Deliverance from Death, is in ſome reſpect an Image, and Aſſurance of our future Deliverance which we are to expect from God's Mercy, and Almighty Power. For as, when St. *Paul* ſaith, That this High Prieſt in the Days of his Fleſh, offered up Prayers and Supplications, with ſtrong Crying and Tears to him that was able to ſave him from Death, *And was heard in that he feared*; we are not to underſtand, that he was altogether freed from Death, but rather, that he had the Favour granted to him of ſwallowing up Death in Victory, and of triumphing over the Powers of Hell; and that through the Shame and Bitterneſs of Death, he is enter'd into his Glory, and into the Joys of his Heavenly Paradiſe: Likewiſe, when we pray to God in our greateſt Diſtreſſes, and deepeſt Sorrows, when we pour into his Boſom the Tears of a ſincere Repentance; he hears us from his Sanctuary, and delivers us from Death, not by hindring us from dying, but by conveying our Souls through Death into an immortal Life; from Sufferings, into Happineſs.

14. To be fully perſwaded that God will not withhold from us the Joys and Comforts of his Holy Spirit, and that he will make us more than Conquerors of Death by admitting us into an eternal Felicity; we need but caſt our Eyes upon this great God and Saviour: For as he who grants a great deal, will not refuſe a little; ſo God, who hath not ſpared his only Son, but hath delivered him for us all, to an ignominious and cruel Death, how ſhall not he with him freely give us all Things? St. *Paul* hath taught us to argue in this manner, and to gather this neceſſary Conſequence from God's Proceedings, *Rom.* 8.

15. When Chriſt our Lord gave up the Ghoſt upon the Croſs, the Veil of the Temple was rent from the Top to the Bottom, Heaven was opened, and a repenting Thief was admitted. All this was to teach us, that we may enter into the Holy of Holies, by the Blood of Jeſus, by the new and living Way, which he hath conſe-

consecrated; by the Veil, that is, his Flesh; that this merciful Lord hath always his Arms wide open to receive us, and that he will never refuse the Glory of Heaven, and the Delights of his Paradise, to the greatest Sinners, who repenting, have Recourse to him by his eternal Mercy, and infinite Merits.

16. The Death of this great God and Saviour is the Payment of all our Debts, and the Expiation of all our Crimes: 'Tis the Healing of all our Diseases, the Freedom from all our Miseries, for it hath overcome Satan and the Powers of Hell: 'Tis the Death of an eternal Death, the meritorious Death that hath purchased for us Heaven and all its Excellencies, and procured to us, a Right to God's Paradise, and to its Delights and Pleasures. In short, 'tis this Death that introduces Paradise into our Souls before we enter into Paradise, and fills our Minds with an heavenly and divine Peace, and an unspeakable and glorious Joy.

17. This Cross of our Saviour may be compared to the Wood which *Moses* cast into the Waters of *Marah*. For it takes away from the natural Death of God's Children, whatsoever is incommodious and bitter, and causeth us to relish Sweetness and Comforts that cannot be expreſt. 'Tis like the Salt which the Prophet *Elisha* cast into the Waters of *Jericho*, to make them wholsome and fruitful: For it causeth that Death it self proves our Salvation, and brings to us unspeakable Comforts. I may also liken it to the Meal which the same Prophet cast into the Pot, of which the Sons of the Prophets had made this Complaint, *O thou Man of God, there is Death in the Pot!* 'Tis the Death of Death, because it removes from it all deadly Poison, and causeth us to relish angelical Satisfactions. I may therefore say of this glorious Cross, that 'tis *the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*; because it makes known and understood the dreadful Evils from which we are delivered, and the infinite Advantages which are procured to us by Christ's Death. I may call it also the *Tree of Life*, for every one that gathers of the Fruit of this

this Tree with the Hand of Faith, and eats of it, ſhall live for ever, *Joh.* 6. Believing Souls, 'tis that myſtical Ladder which *Jacob* ſaw in a Viſion, for it unites Heaven and Earth, ſinful Man with his God, *Gen.* 28. It pleaſed the Father to make Peace by the Blood of his Son crucified, and to reconcile all Things to himſelf, whether they be Things in Earth, or Things in Heaven, *Coloſſ.* 1. 'Tis by the Means of this bleſſed Croſs that the good Angels are ſent to our Aſſiſtance, and that all the Graces and Bleſſings of God are procured to us. By this Croſs we ſhall aſcend up to God, and to his eternal Happineſs. Under the Shadow of this divine Croſs our Souls reſt, and enjoy the Peace of God, which paſſeth all Underſtanding. 'Tis like the golden Scepter which King *Ahaſuerus* ſtretched out unto *Eſther*. For if we touch this precious Croſs with the Hand of Faith, if we embrace it with a contrite Soul, we ſhall obtain from the King of Kings, not only the half Part, but all his Kingdom, with all its Delights, Honours, and Advantages.

18. *Moſes*'s Rod was changed into a Serpent, as well as the Rods of *Pharaoh*'s Magicians; but this Serpent devoured all the reſt. Thus the Death of our Lord and Saviour is accompanied with Sorrow, Fear, and Anguiſh; but theſe Fears ſwallow up all other Fears, and cauſe us to draw near with Confidence to the Throne of Grace. His Sorrows drive away all our Griefs, and fill us with Joy and eternal Comfort. His Anguiſh gives Eaſe and Satisfaction to our Souls. His troubled Mind is the cauſe of the Settlement of our Conſciences. His Drops of Blood waſh away our Tears. His Groans hinder us from Sighing, and his ſtrong Crying cauſes us to ſing with Joy. The Fetters of this glorious Redeemer have purchaſed our Freedom; and his Condemnation our Abſolution. He hath been content to drink Vinegar mingled with Gall, and to ſwallow the very Dregs of the Cup of God's Wrath and Juſtice, that he might cauſe us to drink of the Rivers of his divine Pleaſure. He cried out in the Violence of his Grief, *My God, my God,*

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why hast thou forsaken me? Matth. 27. That God might never forsake us, and that in our greatest Troubles we might have always his fatherly and powerful Assistance ready at hand, he stoop'd down his Head to raise our Hopes. In short, he is dead, that he might deliver them, who through Fear of Death, were all their Life-time subject to a cruel and unsufferable Bondage, *Heb.* 2. So that all such as tremble and are afraid at the Approaches of Death, have not yet felt the Power and Efficacy of the Cross of our Lord Jesus. They trample under foot the Blood of the Son of God, and as much as in them lies, they render the Fruits and Efficacy of this blessed Death of no Effect.

19. Consider well, Christian Souls, nnd imprint into your Minds this Lesson; Remember that Death is never to be feared, but when 'tis attended with God's Wrath, and the Curse of his Law; when our Sins and Offences have supplied it with offensive Weapons, when the Devil who seeks to devour us as a roaring Lion, follows Death at the Heels; and when at the same Time, Hell opens its infernal Jaws to swallow us up. But those who have placed their Faith and Hope in the Death and Passion of the Saviour of the World, and who embrace his Cross, are exempted from all its Fears, and out of the Reach of all its poisonous Darts.

20. My beloved Souls, be not therefore frighted to see the Face of the great Judge of the World, 1 *Tim.* 2. because we have such an excellent Mediator between God and Man, namely the Man Christ Jesus, who hath given himself a Ransom for all, *Rom.* 3. He hath disarmed God's eternal Justice, and stopp'd the Proceedings of his Vengeance. For God hath appointed him from all Eternity to be a Propitiation by Faith in his Blood, *John* 5. The Father judges no Man, but hath given all Judgment to the Son, as he is the Son of Man. There is now no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus: Whosoever believes in him, shall never

never come into Condemnation, but is paſſed from Death to Life, *Rom.* 8. *John* 5.

21. Fear no more the Thunderbolts, and the Flaſhes of Fire of Mount *Sinai*; neither tremble when you hear its terrible Thunder, *Curſed is every one who continues not in all Things written in the Book of the Law, to do them*, Deut. 28. For tho' Chriſt's Hands be nailed and faſtned to the Wood, they pluck nevertheleſs out of the Hands of God's Juſtice, his terrible Thunderbolts, and the Sword of his Vengeance. The precious Blood that runs down from the Wounds of this Divine Redeemer, quenches the ſcorching Heat of this conſuming Fire and Flames. As at the Time of our Saviour's Paſſion, he had a Care of his Diſciples, and therefore he deſired thoſe that came to take him, *If you ſeek me, let theſe go*, John 18: Likewiſe he hath now a Care of all ſuch as believe in his Name, to ſecure them under the Shadow of his Croſs. He takes their Place, and for them he ſtands before God's Juſtice, ſaying, Since you have taken me to be their Pledge, and have purſued me without Mercy; and ſince I have ſufficiently ſatisfied for their Crimes, and have taſted for them the moſt bitter and cruel Death; ſuffer them to enjoy the Freedom that hath been purchaſed at ſuch a dear Rate. Suffer them to paſs through Death, into the Enjoyment of a bleſſed Life, which is the Price of my Blood, and the Fruit of my Victories. This merciful Redeemer hath put himſelf, of his own accord, in our Stead, and hath endured, in his own Perſon, all the Pains which were due to our Sins. He hath been ſtruck with *Moſes*'s Rod, and pierced through with the Darts of the Law; he hath been made a Curſe for us, for it is written, *Curſed is every one that hangeth upon a Tree*, Gal. 5. But we are not only by his means redeemed from the Curſe of the Law, but we are alſo bleſſed in him, with all manner of heavenly Bleſſings. When we were without Chriſt, we were Aliens from the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*, having no Hope, and without God in the World. But we who were far off,

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are made nigh by the Blood of Christ; we have Access with Confidence by Faith in his precious Blood, so that we may go with Boldness to the Throne of Grace to find Mercy and Help in time of need, *Heb.* 4. Rejoice therefore, Christian Souls, for you are not come to the Mount that might not be touch'd with Hands, nor to a burning Fire, nor unto Blackness, and Darkness, and Tempest, and the Sound of a Trumpet, and the Voice of Words; which Voice, they that heard, intreated that the Word should not be spoken to them any more; but ye are come unto Mount *Sion*, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly *Jerusalem*, and to an innumerable Company of Angels, to the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling, that speaketh better Things than that of *Abel*: For *Abel*'s Blood called for Vengeance against his Brother, *Heb.* 12. *Col.* 1. but the Blood of Christ pleads for Mercy, Pardon, and Forgiveness for them who were his Enemies in their Understandings and wicked Deeds. And if when we were Enemies, we have been reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, *Rom.* 5. how much more now, that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his Life and Intercession.

22. Never fear the Devil nor all the Powers of Hell, for according to God's ancient Promise, *The Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head*, Gen. 3. The Lord of Glory hath spoiled the Principalities and Powers, he hath made a shew of them, openly triumphing over them on his Cross, *Coloss.* 2. By his Death, he hath destroyed him who had the Empire of Death, that is, the Devil; so that he hath crushed to pieces this red Dragon that devoured whole Nations and People, *Heb.* 2. *Rev.* 12. As it happened when the Children of *Israel* look'd up to the brazen Serpent set up by *Moses* in the Wilderness, they were perfectly

cured

cured of the Bitings of the fiery Serpents: Thus, wretched Sinners, who feel the venomous and deadly Wounds of the old Serpent, caſt the Eyes of your Faith upon Jeſus Chriſt crucified, and you ſhall be ſaved from Death, *Joh.* 3. As when the Angel deſtroy'd the Firſt-born of *Egypt*, he had not the Power to meddle with the Children of *Iſrael*, who had ſprinkled their Doors with the Blood of the paſchal Lamb; ſo the Devil, who deſtroys the Children of this World, hath no Power to touch thoſe whoſe Hearts and Conſciences are waſhed in the Blood of the ſpotleſs Lamb. And as *Pharaoh* and all the *Egyptians* that followed him, were overwhelmed and drowned in the Waters of the Red-Sea, *Heb.* 10. which ſerved as a Paſſage to the Children of *Iſrael* to their promiſed Land: Thus Satan and all his wicked Spirits are as it were ſwallowed up in the precious Sea of Chriſt's Blood, which opens to us a Way to the celeſtial *Canaan*. Rejoice ye Heavens, and you that dwell in them, for the Accuſer of your Brethren is caſt out, who accuſed them Day and Night before God, but they have overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb, 1 *Pet.* 1. *Jam.* 5. Chriſtian Souls, reſiſt the Devil, and he will fly from you. If he goes about as a roaring Lion ſeeking whom he may devour, be not troubled at his Fury, nor at his infernal Power, for he is tied to a Chain that he cannot ſtretch nor break; he hath been overcome by the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*. Take therefore the Shield of Faith, that you may be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil, *Rev.* 6. and to ſpeak to him with an undaunted Spirit, get thee behind me Satan, for thou haſt no Part in me. I belong to the Lord Jeſus who hath paid my Ranſom, who hath redeemed me with his Blood, and ſealed me with his Spirit. The Gates of Hell have no Power upon thoſe who are built upon the Rock of Eternity, *Matth.* 16.

23. Let not your Sins caſt you into the Abyſs of Deſpair, nor drive you from the Anchor of your Hope.

For God hath ſo loved the World, that he hath given his only Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life. They that are whole, have no Need of a Phyſician, but they that are Sick, *Joh.* 3. Our Saviour is not come to call the Juſt to Repentance; ſuch as are puft up with a vain Conceit of their own Righteouſneſs; but Sinners, who acknowledge their Faults, and are ſorry for them. The ſacred Arms of your Redeemer that were ſtretched wide open upon the Croſs, are yet ſtretched wide open to receive us; and from the higheſt Heavens where he dwells, he cauſeth theſe comfortable Words to be heard; *Come unto me all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*, Matth. 11. This merciful Lord is come to ſeek the loſt Sheep, to ſave ſuch as were periſhed, and to redeem his People from their Sins. As by one Man, Sin came into the World, and by Sin, Death; thus Death is come upon all Men, for they have all Sinned: Likewiſe by the Obedience of one, we are become Conquerors over Death, *Rom.* 5. and we have obtained the Gift of Righteouſneſs and Immortality: 'Tis the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World, who hath made an Atonement for all our Iniquities, *Joh.* 1. For as the Ram that was caught by the Horns in a Thicket, was offered up to God as a Burnt-offering inſtead of *Iſaac*, Eph. 5. Thus the true Lamb of God hath been offered up unto God upon the Croſs for us as a Burnt-ſacrifice, well-pleaſing unto him. He hath born our Iniquities in his Body upon the Tree, and by his Stripes we are healed, *Iſa.* 53. He hath born our Griefs, and carried our Sorrows, the Chaſtiſement of our Peace was upon him. As *Aaron* put upon the live Goat *Hazazel*, all the Sins of the People, *Lev.* 16. God hath made him who knows no Sin, to be made Sin for us, that we might become the Righteouſneſs of God in him, 2 *Cor.* 5. *Acts* 10. Whoſoever believes in him ſhall receive Remiſſion of Sins in his Name. Therefore rather than to run into Deſpair, as *Cain*, *Achitophel*, and *Judas*, let

let us cry out with King *David*, *O bleſſed is the Man whoſe Tranſgreſſion is forgiven, and whoſe Sin is covered. O bleſſed is he unto whom the Lord imputeth no Sin*, Pſal. 31. Or let us burſt out into St. *Paul*'s Language, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? 'tis God that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth? 'tis Chriſt that died*, Rom. 8. Let us therefore embrace this crucified Jeſus, and ſay, with the Bleſſed Virgin, *My Soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour:* Or with the glorified Spirits of Heaven, *To him that hath loved us, and waſhed us from our Sins in his Blood, be Glory and Strength for ever and ever.* Amen.

24. Chriſtian Souls, if the vaſt Number of your Sins come into your Remembrance, conſider that 'tis not ſaid, that the Blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us only from a certain Number of Sins, but, *That if we confeſs our Sins, he is faithful and juſt, that is, true and merciful, to forgive us our Sins; and that the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all Sins.* Let them be never ſo numerous, drown them all as ſo many helliſh Monſters in the Blood of thy Saviour. Take hold of this Divine Jeſus, with the Arms of Faith and Repentance. Wrap your ſelves up in his Winding-ſheet, repoſe your ſelves upon his Croſs, and reſt ſecure in the Shadow of his Almighty Interceſſion.

25. But if the Heinouſneſs of your Crimes fright you, take hold at the ſame time of the Horns of this myſtical Altar, and all the Powers of Hell will not be able to pluck you thence. Comfort thy ſelf, ſinful Soul, for there cannot be a ſpot ſo black, or ſo deep, but the Blood of Chriſt is able to waſh it clean away. There is no Crime ſo abominable, but the Sacrifice of this Lamb without Spot, that taketh away the Sins of the World, can make an Atonement for it. Let thy Sins be never ſo great, they have their Limits, but thy Redeemer's Merits are without Limits, and the Efficacy of his Sufferings continues for ever. To aſſure thee of this Truth, and to encourage thee, he was plea-

sed, upon the Cross to discover the Riches of his Mercy upon a wretched Robber, who suffered then by the Hand of Justice for his Crimes. As soon as he saw him moved with Repentance, he changed his infamous and painful Cross into a Paradise of Glory and Happiness, and filled his Soul with the sweetest Comforts of his holy Spirit. This merciful Redeemer is the same Yesterday, and to Day, and shall be the same for ever. Therefore, if thou art reckon'd amongst the most filthy and abominable Sinners, if thou dost groan under the Burden of thy Sins, and art moved with Contrition, *Heb.* 13. thou oughtest not to cast off thy Hopes and be discouraged; draw near with Humility to thy Saviour's Cross, and wash thy self in the Blood that comes out of his Veins. All the diseased Persons that entred into the Pool of *Bethesda*, were healed of all manner of Distempers, *Joh.* 5. Thus all spiritually diseased are cured in this divine Pool of all their Griefs. 'Tis not necessary to stay till a good Angel come from Heaven to move the Waters, for Christ's Blood is always fresh; living, and of the same Virtue and Efficacy. We need not fear that others should step down before us, or that the Throng should hinder us; for a Thousand Worlds may be all healed at the same Instant. Neither can we pretend that there is no Body to cast us into this mystical Pool, for our Lord will never refuse to admit you when you shall have been Bedrid eight and thirty Years, as the poor Man that was troubled with the Palsie. And when you shall be nailed to a Cross, as the good Thief, you may nevertheless dip your selves into this divine Pool, and feel its saving and healing Virtue. It doth not only wash away the Filth, and heal all thy Diseases, but it gives also Life to the Dead, and renders the Living immortal. Whosoever thou art that dipest thy self in this precious Blood, thou mayst say with the Apostle St. *Paul*, this is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am the chief, 1 *Tim.* 1. Howbeit I have obtained Mercy,

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the Lord will deliver me from all wicked Works, and will preſerve me to his heavenly Kingdom; to him be Glory for ever and ever, *Amen.* 1 *Tim.* 7.

26. You underſtand therefore very well, believing Souls, that you have no Cauſe to fear Death, ſince all its Darts have been broken to pieces, all its Armour hath been torn, and its Spoils appear ſo viſibly upon Chriſt's Croſs. You may ſee the Claws of this old Lion, the Paw of this devouring Bear, the Teeth and Poiſon of this infernal Serpent, and the Head of this prodigious Dragon; you may ſee Death ſwallowed up in Victory, and the Prince of Life, leading it in Triumph. Follow then the glorious Chariot of this Noble Conqueror, ſaying with the Apoſtle, *O Death! Where is thy Sting? O Grave! Where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law, but bleſſed be God who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 15.

27. Therefore when God ſhall draw near to you, under Death's Veil, be not terrified? Seek not to run from him, and to hide your ſelves from his All-ſeeing Eye, unto which Darkneſs is as the Noon-day, *Gen.* 3. Tho' you are by Nature poor, wretched, blind and naked, you have more ſubſtantial Garments than Fig-leaves, for you have the Leaves of the Tree of Life, that are deſigned for the Salvation of the Gentiles, *Rev.* 22. The Leaves that ſhall never fade ſhall cover all your Nakedneſs, and adorn your immortal Souls. For 'tis the eternal Righteouſneſs, the moſt accompliſhed Righteouſneſs of our Lord Jeſus, who hath been made unto us of God, Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. 'tis Jeſus Chriſt himſelf who is named, *The Lord of our Righteouſneſs.* 'Tis the precious Garment of Salvation, the glorious Cloak of Righteouſneſs mentioned by the Prophet, *Iſa.* 61. 'Tis the Wedding Garment whiten'd in the Blood of the Lamb without Spot, and the fine and bright Linen which are the Righteouſneſs of the

Saints, *Ezek.* 16. In short, 'tis a Garment, which will not only cover and adorn you, but will also heal all your Infirmities, and advance you to Immortality, *Revel.* 7.

28. If you come before your heavenly Father with this perfumed Cloathing of your Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, *Gen.* 27. or rather, if you be cloathed with him as with a Garment, *Rom.* 1. you shall not only obtain the best and most advantagious Blessing, but you shall enter into the Possession of the incorruptible Inheritance, prepared for you from the Beginning of the World. *For the Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is Eternal Life, through our Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom. 6.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who strengthens himself against the Fears of Death, by meditating upon the Death and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

O Merciful Saviour! Who hast taken our mortal Nature, that thou mightest offer it up as a Sacrifice to God; vouchsafe me thine Assistance, and an Increase of my Faith and Hope, now that I am threatned to be devoured by Death. I embrace thy Cross and Passion as mine only Relief, I take hold of the Horns of this Altar, and claim an Interest in thy Suffering and Righteousness. How grievous were thy Torments, O blessed Redeemer! Which made thee sweat drops of Blood, required the Comfort of Angels, and drew from thee strong Crying and Tears. But thy Death was not as mine, or as the Departure of thine holy Martyrs, who went willingly to Execution with Expressions of Joy. Thy Death was an Atonement for the Sins of the whole World; but ours can yield no Satisfaction to the Divine Justice; it makes us capable of reaping the Fruits of thine eternal Compassions and Mediation. Thou sufferedst the heavy Strokes of God's Wrath, and tookest upon thee the Load of

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our Sins; but we, inſtead of this conſuming Fire quench'd by thy precious Death, perceive in our Death the Flames and Motions of thy Love. Inſtead of the Hand of thy Vengeance, we meet here with the Embraces of thy Mercy, ready to admit us into eternal Happineſs. Death appears to us armed with our Sins, and the dreadful Conſequences of Hell and Damnation. But I ſee all this Armour hanging upon thy Croſs, as the everlaſting Trophies and Monuments of thy Glory. Thou haſt been pierc'd with the Darts of a cruel Death, ſuffered the terrible Thunderbolts and Curſes of the Law; and thou haſt drunk the Dregs of the Cup of God's Fury for our Sakes, that thou mighteſt conquer Sin, Death and Satan, and free us from the Curſes we had deſerved. O wonderful Saviour! Thou haſt ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, ſhewing them openly, and triumphing over them in the Croſs. How marvellous are thy Works, and worthy of the continual Admiration of Men and Angels. What extraordinary Benefits do I reap from thy Bleſſed Paſſion. Thy violent Sufferings are Preventions of my Torments; thy Bruiſes and Wounds are my Safety and Cure; thy Fears comfort and ſettle my Mind; thy diſtreſſed Soul fills mine full of Joy; thy Crying appeaſes the Troubles of my Conſcience; and thy Drops of Blood waſh away my Tears; thy Bitterneſs is my Sweetneſs, and thy Death my Victory, and thy Croſs my Triumph. I ſhall no longer tremble at the Approaches of Death, ſince thou haſt purchaſed for me Life and Immortality, and the Kingdom of Heaven is thine by a two-fold Right, as thou art the Son of God, and Heir of all Things, and as thou haſt paid for it a valuable Price by thine infinite Merits. The firſt is ſufficient for Thee: By the ſecond we have a Claim to this Kingdom, and ſhall poſſeſs it as the Fruits of thy Death and Sufferings. My Hope is in thee, O bleſſed Lord! Suffer me not to fail in mine Expectations. I know that nothing impure ſhall enter into thine Holy City, but thy Blood ſhall waſh and cleanſe me from all my Sins. O Glorious Lord! How wonderful art thou, and how precious is thy Death, the Atonement of my Crimes, and the Ranſom of the whole World. 'Tis our Peace with God,

our Reconciliation with Heaven, and with the Angels of Light. In a Word, it hath not only rescued me out of an Abyss of Misery, from an eternal Damnation and the endless Torments of Hell; but it hath purchased for me Heaven and its Glory, and Paradise with all its unspeakble Delights. And the Method thou hast taken, O victorious Son of David! *To accomplish this, deserves our Admiration. By thine own Death thou hast conquer'd Death; and by entering into its dark Prison, hast given to Death its mortal Wound. Thy Cross therefore to me is as* Jacob's *Ladder, where at the Bottom I may sleep secure from Sin and the Fears of the Grave, and by it ascend up to the Throne of Grace to obtain Mercy and Help in time of Need. 'Tis the Source of Sweetness, Comfort, Joy, and of my noblest and future Expectations. 'Tis a perfect Example to instruct me, how to die well, and how I ought to be prepared when I leave the World. Grant me Grace to imitate thee, to express to all my Relations that cordial Affection and Tenderness which I find in thee, to forgive my greatest and mortal Enemies, to pray for my Persecutors, to submit with Patience to thy Will, to behave my self with Courage and Resolution, with Zeal and Affection for thy Glory. Here I offer my self to thy Disposal. My Soul belongs to thee as to its Creator and Redeemer; for thou hast ransom'd it, washt and sanctified it, cloathed it with thy Righteousness, and put it into a Capacity of entring into thine heavenly Sanctuary, and of appearing before the Father of Lights. Take it into thy Custody, O sweet Jesus, who hast been crucified for me a wretched Sinner. Grant, I beseech thee, that I may for ever live and reign with thee in Glory, in thine eternal Kingdom.* Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

The Fourth Conſolation againſt the Fears of Death, is to meditate often upon our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in his Sepulchre.

MAN naturally abhors and hates the Sight of Graves. Some cannot paſs by a Chuch-yard without expreſſing a Diſtaſte and Dread. Not only they who make their Abode in glorious Palaces, and ſtately Dwellings, but alſo they who reſide in poor Huts or in pitiful Cabins; they who are ſhut up in black Dungeons, or expoſed to the Injury of the Weather, who have no other Covering but the Sky, can never think upon Death without Fear, when they are to mind that this Body muſt go into the Bowels of the Earth, and lie down in a ſtinking and noiſome Grave.

If we will baniſh from our Souls this dangerous Apprehenſion, and needleſs Fears, we muſt conſider ſeriouſly, with a religious Application, that we ought never to abhor the Earth, becauſe our Bodies have been made of Earth; it hath been as it were the Mother from whence we proceed.

We muſt alſo conſider, that 'tis the general Rule of Nature that all compounded Bodies muſt return at their Diſſolution every Part to its firſt Principle. Therefore as the Soul aſcends up to its firſt Source, and returns to God who gave it; likewiſe 'tis no wonder if the Body returns to Duſt, becauſe it proceeds from Duſt, and God hath pronounc'd a Sentence in the earthly Paradiſe, which ſhall never be revok'd; *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return*, Gen. 3. *Nicodemus* enquired of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *How can a Man be born when he is old? Can he enter the ſecond time into his Mothers Womb and be born?* John 3. This ridiculous and improbable Conceit, is proved in

a manner to be true in this Occasion, for we must enter again into the Womb of the Earth our common Mother, that we may be born again, and pass into another Life.

'Tis not amiss to consider often the notable Representations of Death, mentioned by St. *Paul*, in the 15th Chapter of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. For our Bodies are as the Seed which is cast into the Earth, that it might bring forth. *O Fool, that which thou sowest, is not quickened except it die.* It cannot flourish until it rots. The Students of Nature inform us, that the Generation of one Thing is the Corruption of another. In this Occasion we may affirm, that the Corruption and Dissolution of this wretched Body, is the Means and Way that leads to a more glorious Generation. You that weep for the Decease of your Friends and Kindred, when you see them laid in their Graves, remember what *David* saith, They that sow in Tears, shall reap with Songs of Joy, *Psal.* 126.

Consider that Death is the Way of all Flesh, and the Grave is the last Retreat which God hath appointed for all Living. So that if we be loth to enter into the Tomb, we must desire Almighty God to grant us a Lodging by our selves, to change the common Course of Nature, or to create for us another World.

Now the Sepulchre is not only the general Rendezvous of all Mankind, but 'tis a Couch where they rest after their laborious and painful Race. Therefore when the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of the Death of good Men, he saith, *They enter into Peace, they rest in their Beds*, Isa. 57. For when he looks to the blessed State of their Souls, he tell us, that they are entred into that great and eternal Peace that reigns in Heaven. But when he casts an Eye upon their Bodies, he saith, *They rest in their Beds.* For this cause the Places appointed to bury the dead, are named *Sleeping Places*, by the *Greeks*, to teach us, that they are fallen asleep, in Expectation of the great Morn, when God

shall

ſhall awaken them with the Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet.

Therefore when *Jacob* was ready to give up the Ghoſt, he commanded his Son *Joſeph* not to bury him in *Egypt, that he might ſleep with his Fathers*, Gen. 47. Likewiſe *Job* ſpeaks in the ſame manner, *I ſhall ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth*, Job 7. And God uſed this Language unto *Moſes*, *Thou art going to ſleep with thy Fathers*, Deut. 31. and to *David*, *When thy Days be fulfilled, thou ſhalt ſleep with thy Fathers*, 2 Sam. 7. And when the Prophet *Daniel* ſpeaks of ſuch as were deceaſed ſince the Creation of the World, he ſaith, *They ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth*, Dan. 12.

Particularly take notice, Chriſtian Souls, that when God ſpoke to *Moſes* from the Midſt of the burning Buſh, he told him, *I am the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob, Exod. 4. They had been dead many Ages before, nevertheleſs, God names himſelf their God: *Now God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living*, Matth. 22. Thoſe holy Men were not dead, in regard of their Souls, for they were immortal, and God had admitted them into eternal Bliſs. Their Bodies alſo, to ſpeak properly, were not dead, but ſlept in their Graves, as our Saviour ſaid of *Jairus*'s Daughter, *The Damſel is not dead, but ſleepeth*, Matth. 9. And of *Lazarus*, *Lazarus our Friend ſleepeth*, John 11. Moreover, we may juſtly ſay, that the Condition of our Bodies in the Grave, is better, and more pleaſant than our daily Sleep; for when we reſt in our Beds, we be often diſturb'd in our Fancy; we labour and ſweat, and the richeſt and moſt magnificent Couches, are not free from this Evil; whereas in our Grave, our Bodies are at reſt, and ſecure from all ſenſe of Pain, and enjoy a perfect Sleep, and a Reſt without Diſturbance.

The greateſt Princes, and the proudeſt Monarchs are conſtrain'd to take up their Lodging, one after another, here in this Houſe, which God hath prepared for all living, and to repoſe themſelves in that

Couch,

Couch, which is to receive all the Sons of *Adam*. When the sacred History gives an Account of the Kings of *Judah*, and of *Israel*, it adds at the End of their Life, *He slept with his Fathers.* Let us never be so wretched, poor, and miserable, we shall be entertain'd in this Dwelling of Kings, and lay our selves down upon their Beds; therefore when *Job*, through the Grievousness of his Pain complain'd, because he had not died immediately after his Birth, he saith, *For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept then, had I been at rest, with Kings and Counsellors of the Earth, which built desolate Places for themselves, or with Princes that had Gold, who filled their Houses with Silver.*

'Tis in this House, and upon this Couch that the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, and generally all the Faithful rest, who have lived in all the Ages of the World; as 'tis recorded of St. *Stephen*, when he had commended his Soul into the Hands of the Lord Jesus, that *he fell asleep*, Acts 7. Therefore when St. *Paul* reproves the *Corinthians*, and acquaints them, that God had punished them with divers Diseases, and Death, because they had profan'd the Lord's Supper, he tells them, *For this Cause many are feeble and sick amongst you, and many sleep.* And when he speaks of all those that were dead in the Profession of Christ's Religion, he saith, they *sleep in Jesus*, and he names them, *they that sleep.* Now we ar not better and nobler than the Saints of Paradise, to expect that our Bodies should receive a better and more favourable Entertainment than they.

In short, there is nothing more able to remove from our Fancy that Horrour of our Graves, than the Consideration of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is entred into the Earth as well as other Men, and hath laid himself down there. He hath sanctified and perfum'd that Place with his divine Presence, and hath made it the Object of our Desires, and the Cause of our Glory. For there is no Subject but thinks it an Honour to lodge in his Prince's Chamber, and to lie

down

down and ſleep upon the Bed where he hath taken his Reſt, though he hath remained there but a Moment, or an Hour. O bleſſed Tomb, where Death and Life, Diſgrace and Glory are lodged together, and where the Prince of Life, the Author of all Honour and Happineſs reſted himſelf.

Chriſtians, who deſire to baniſh from your Souls all Fears of Death, and Apprehenſions of your Graves, look upon your Sepulchres in the ſame manner as if you ſhould ſee there Jeſus Chriſt the King of Glory, the Prince of your Salvation yet remaining aſleep. When old *Jacob* heard the miſtaken News of the Death of his Son *Joſeph*, he was overcome with a violent Grief, ſo that he cried out, *I ſhall go down with Sorrow to my Son into the Grave.* But the certain News of the Death and Burial of our true *Joſeph*, will fill us full of unſpeakable Comforts, and will cauſe us to ſpeak in another manner, I ſhall go down to my Father into the Sepulchre with Joy. The Prophet *Elijah* raiſed to Life a Child which was laid in his Chamber upon his Bed; when he ſtretched himſelf upon it, the Soul that was departed came again. And *Eliſha* raiſed another in the ſame manner, by applying his Mouth to the Child's, his Hands and Eyes to the little Infant's. But, believing Soul, God works for thee, in this Occaſion, a far more wonderful Miracle, for our Reſurrection and Life, proceed from the Death and Burial of our great Prophet. If we go into this holy Tomb, if we lay our ſelves down upon this precious Body, if we embrace it with a true and lively Faith, and a ſerious Repentance, he will quicken us again, and cauſe us to become immortal, for he hath been pleaſed to enter into the State of the Dead, with an Intent to procure us a Bleſſing, and a glorious Immortality.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who strengthens himself against the frightful Aspect of the Grave, by looking upon our Lord Jesus Christ laid in his Tomb.

O Wonderful Mediator between God and Man! Thou art God Immortal, and yet hast vouchsafed to take upon thee our Mortal Nature, and to die for me miserable Sinner, and to remain for a time in the State of the Dead, that thou might'st procure to me a blessed Immortality. Give me Grace to meditate as I ought, upon thy sacred Body, wrapped up in a Winding-sheet, and laid in the Earth. For by this means, O sweet Jesus, I shall be reconciled to the Sight of the Grave, I shall look with a stedfast and settled Countenance on the Pit, into which I must enter, when thou shalt appoint it. For the Servant is not greater than his Master. It belongs not to the Creature to prefer it self above the Creator. Since I expect to share in thy Glory and Exaltation, 'tis but just and reasonable that I take some Part in thy Disgraces and Abasement. My Reason, assisted by thine Holy Spirit, teacheth me, that I must be content to be wrapped up in thy Darkness, and remain with thee in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, since I hope to be cloathed one day with Light, and crowned with an eternal Life. I must not only look upon the Grave without Fear, but I shall consider it with Joy, in regard thou hast honour'd it with thine Holy Presence, and perfum'd it with thy divine and celestial Odour. I shall look upon it, as if thou didst yet lie down in it, as if I were to keep thee company there, my Lord, and my God. A dead Man return'd to Life again, when he did but touch the Bones of thy Prophet; but I do not only touch the Prince of Prophets, but embrace thee by Faith, as thou art dead for my Sins, and as resting in thy Grave for my Salvation. Thou shalt therefore make me sensible of thy divine Vertue, put in me the Seeds of Immortality, and raise my Hopes up to Heaven. My Soul hath already a Share in the first Resurrection, and one Day this infirm Body shall return to Newness of Li

If my Reſurrection be not ſo quick and ſpeedy, as that of the Dead raiſed to Life by the Prophet, it ſhall be far more glorious and laſting, that I may bleſs thee with all thy Saints, and praiſe thee for ever, with thine Inheritance in Heaven. Amen.

CHAP. XVII.

The Fifth Conſolation againſt the Fears of Death, is to meditate upon the Reſurrection of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

AS there is nothing more grievous and unſufferable than to behold a proud and inſulting Enemy, who is always victorious, and whom none can overcome in his inſolent and braving Humour; likewiſe there is nothing more pleaſant and comfortable, than to ſee ſueh a Pride caſt down, and to triumph over ſuch an Enemy. Therefore the Children of *Iſrael*, who had long groaned under the cruel Tyranny of *Pharaoh*, ſang with Joy a Song of Thankſgiving, when God deſtroyed that wretched Tyrant, and buried him and his Army in the Waves of the Red-Sea. For this Cauſe, when the red Dragon, the ancient Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, *Rev.* 20. 2. who ſeduceth whole Nations, was overcome, and caſt down from Heaven to the Earth; there were Songs of Joy and Gladneſs heard in Heaven, *Rev.* 12. *Now is come Salvation and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Chriſt; for the Accuſer of our Brethren is caſt down, which accuſed them before our God Day and Night; therefore rejoice ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them.*

From hence let us conclude, Chriſtian Souls, as it was a grievous Affliction, and a ſenſible Grief, to behold Death tyrannizing over all the World, and ſhutting

shutting up in its Dungeons, Kings, and Monarchs, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, and generally all the Children of *Adam*, of what Condition or Degree soever; likewise 'tis a great Comfort, and unspeakable Joy to us, to behold this cruel and proud Enemy brought down, overcome and disarm'd, to see our Lord Jesus Christ marching out of Death's Fortifications, loaden with its Spoils; rejoice therefore ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them, for the Murderer of our Brethren is swallowed up into Victory.

We who are the Members of this great Conqueror, have a Share in this Honour and Glory; in his Person we are Conquerors of Death, so that we may say with the Apostle, *That God hath quickned us together, and raised us up with him.*

This Prince of Life, hath not only loosned all the Bands of Death, and broken to pieces all its Chains, but he hath led away Death in Triumph, and made it subject to his celestial Empire. He hath an absolute Power over Death, as he himself declares in these Words, *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore,* Amen; *and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.*

For it stands with Reason, that if this invincible Lord, when he was in the Prison of Death, commanded over Death it self; if he broke in pieces its iron Bars, and its brazen Gates; if he caused the Dead to go out, and lead them into the holy City; now that he is out of the Grave a victorious Conqueror, he must needs command, with an uncontroulable Power, this dreadful Enemy which he hath already overcome, and brought under by his Almighty Hand.

O Death! Fret and foam out thy Rage and Fury, I see that thou art tied as a Prisoner, to the triumphing Chariot of Jesus Christ my Saviour; and I am certain that thou canst do nothing without Leave, and that thou canst not go a Step, unless he lengthens thy Chain.

A *Joshua*, when he had overcome the Kings of *Ca-*

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naan, call'd for his Captains, and ſpoke to them in this manner, *Come near, and put your Feet upon the Necks of theſe Kings; fear not, nor be diſmay'd, be ſtrong, and of good Courage.* Likewiſe we may imagine, believing Souls, that our divine *Joſhua*, the Conqueror of Death calls to us from Heaven. Tread upon this wretched Death with boldneſs, fear not, nor be diſmay'd.

The Children of *Iſrael* who trembled at the Threatnings of *Goliah*, were freed from all Apprehenſions, when they ſaw him fall with a Stone from *David*'s Sling, ſo that the moſt timorous could have freely put their Feet upon his Neck. And ſhall not you, Chriſtians, baniſh from your Hearts all Fear and Dread of Death, now that you ſee 'tis caſt down at the Feet of our true *David*, that great Shepherd and Biſhop of our Souls? For tho' it opens its Jaws, and foams out Flames of Fire, it hath nevertheleſs received the Stroke of Death, and is at the laſt Gaſp.

And as the Servant of *Jonathan*, the Son of *Saul*, diſpatched and killed thoſe whom his Maſter had caſt down; thus we need but purſue the glorious Victories of the Son of the King of Kings, or rather, we need but gather up the pleaſant Fruits of his Conqueſts. For this Prince of Life that hath overcome Death for us, offers to overcome it alſo in us with the Weapons with which he arms us. In ſhort, to ſpeak properly, there can be no Death for ſuch as are incorporated in Jeſus Chriſt by a true and lively Faith. For he that lives and believeth in him, ſhall never die; and he that believeth in him, tho' he were dead, yet ſhall he live, *Joh.* 11.

A Prayer and Meditation for the believing Soul who arms it self against the Fears of Death, by Meditating upon the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

LOrd Jesus, who hast been fully declared to be the Son of God with Power, by the Resurrection from the Dead, and who livest for ever and ever, strengthen me in my Weakness, comfort me in my Sorrows, and drive from my Soul all Fears and Apprehensions of Death. O wonderful Saviour! I need no longer dread this cruel and proud Enemy; for thou hast broken all its Fetters and Chains, and hast overcome Death and the Grave. O glorious and triumphing Monarch! Shall I tremble before a discomfited and disarmed Enemy, whom I see lying under my Feet, and chained to thy triumphing Chariot? I need but follow the sacred Footsteps of thy Victories, and gather its excellent Fruits. If thou hast been able to deal with Death, when thou wast shut up in a Dungeon; if thou didst then bring down its Pride, and carry away its Prisoners; what may not I expect from thy Victories and almighty Arm, now that thou hast in thy Hand the Keys of Hell and Death? O most mighty and merciful Lord! Thou hast not only overcome Death for me, but thou wilt also overcome it by me, who am thy Child, and the Sheep of thy Pasture, whereof thou hast paid the Ransom. Thou art not only raised from the Dead, but thou art also the Resurrection and the Life. Thou art the Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory and Immortality; so that he that lives and believeth in thee, shall never die; and whosoever believeth in thee, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Sampson's *Act was admirable, when he slept until Midnight, rose up, and carried away the Gates of* Gaza *upon his Shoulders, up to an high Mountain; but who would not admire thee, O invincible* Nazarite! *who having slept until the third Day in the Bowels of the Earth, didst rise again by thy divine Virtue, carry away the Gates of Hell, and made them to become the Gates of Heaven,*

Heaven, and the Entrance into thy celeſtial Paradiſe. Let me die, ſince my Redeemer liveth, and intends to introduce me into an happy Life, purchaſed for me with his moſt precious Blood, and ſecured for me by his glorious Reſurrection. Amen.

The Sixth Conſolation againſt the Fears of Death, is the Aſcenſion of Jeſus Chriſt into Heaven, and his Sitting at the Right Hand of God.

'TIS indeed a great Joy and Comfort to behold a cruel and proud Enemy overcome and diſarm'd, and our ſelves freed, by that means, from the heavy Yoke of his unſufferable Tyranny; but our Joy would be turned into Grief, and our Comfort into Sadneſs, if we did but perceive at the ſame time the Author of our Freedom, choaked with his own Blood, and breathing, out the laſt Gaſp, at the Moment of his Victory. 'Tis requiſite to render his Satisfaction compleat and perfect, that his Triumphs might be everlaſting, and that he might be advanc'd to the higheſt Glory, and ſovereign Empire. Now there is no Enemy more cruel and terrible than Death. We have beheld it diſarm'd upon the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and perfectly vanquiſh'd and ſubdu'd by his glorious Reſurrection. But if with the Eye of our Faith, we look a little higher, to the glorious Aſcenſion of our Divine Saviour, we ſhall ſee the ſame Death bound to his triumphing Chariot, and this conquering Redeemer exalted above the higheſt Heavens, and ſitting glorioufly at the right Hand of God. We ſhall ſee him inveſted in an almighty Power, adored by all Creatures. We ſhall ſee him commanding not only the Angels of Light, and the celeſtial Spirits that are about his magnificent Throne,

but exercising Dominion also over this World, over Death, the Devils, and Hell. Because he hath been *Obedient unto Death, yea, to the ignominious Death of the Cross, God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, in Earth, and under the Earth*, Phil. 2. *and that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.*

Every Soldier shares not always in the Triumph of the General, and all the Subjects taste not of their Prince's Happiness; but as we are the Brethren of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Members of his mystical Body, we have a Share in his Triumph, and in the Glory of his Empire. Therefore the Apostle St. *Paul* informs us, *That our Life*, that is to say, our Glory and eternal Felicity *is hid with Christ in God.* In another Place he tells us, in express Words, *That God, who is rich in Mercy, hath made us sit in heavenly Places with Jesus Christ.*

This glorious Saviour is gone to take Possession of the Kingdom of Heaven, not only for himself, but also in our Names, and for us. Therefore he informs the Holy Apostles, and all true Believers, *That in his Father's House there are many Mansions; I am going to prepare a Place there for you.* In the same manner he speaks in that admirable Prayer, in the which he consecrates himself to God, for the great Work of our Redemption, *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.* For the same Reason, St. *Paul* tells us, in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, for our Comfort, *Heb.* 6. that Christ is gone to Heaven *as our Fore runner.*

The High Priest of the *Jews* enter'd into the earthly Sanctuary, to present himself before God for the People, *Heb.* 9. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ is gone into the heavenly Sanctuary, to appear for us in the Presence of God. The High Priest of the *Jews* carried upon his Breast and Shoulders, the Names of the 12 Tribes of *Israel*, but Jesus Christ hath engraven us upon his Heart, according

according to the Prayer of the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, Cant. 8. *Set me as a Seal upon thine Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm, for Love is as ſtrong as Death.* The High Prieſt of the *Jews* did caſt off the Names of the Twelve Tribes with the Robes; but neither Death nor Life, nor Things preſent, nor Things to come, ſhall ever ſeparate us from the Love of God in Jeſus Chriſt, *Rom.* 8.

The royal Diadem that was put upon *Eſther*'s Head, never cauſed her to forget her People and Parentage. She was mightily grieved for *Haman*'s Conſpiracy, and the Decree which he had cauſed King *Ahaſuerus* to ſign and ſeal with a Signet. I may likewiſe ſay, that the Glory to which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is now raiſed, can never make him forget the People that he hath redeemed with his Blood. He is not unmindful of Satan's Plots, nor of the Sentence and Doom pronounced againſt us by the great Monarch of the World, and confirm'd by his Great Seal. His glorious Head may be crown'd with the Rainbow, but his merciful Heart is inflam'd with Love for us. He thinks it no Diſgrace to acknowledge us for his Brethren, and to pray God for us who ſits upon his Throne, where thouſand Millions wait upon him, and ten thouſand Thouſands worſhip him. He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all ſuch as draw near to God through him, for he lives always to intercede for us. If the Father hath always granted him his Requeſt, when he was in his greateſt Abaſement, can we imagine that his Interceſſion will be fruitleſs now, that he is aſcended up to the higheſt Glory?

From his Exaltation to Heaven, he beholds all our Encounters and our Strugglings with Death. He ſees all the Enemies that aſſault us, and the Dangers unto which we are expoſed. He is acquainted with the deep Malice and crafty Deſigns of the Enemies of our Salvation. He perceives all the Darts that they let fly againſt us. Therefore he covers us with his Shield, and will not ſuffer us to be overcome by Temptation. He fulfills his Virtue in our Infirmities, and makes us more than Conquerors. He hath an Eye always upon his Flock;

he holds his Sheep all in his Hand, and none is able to pluck them from thence.

When he was upon Earth in his Agony, at this Word that dropt out of his Mouth, *I am he*, Joh. 10. his Enemies fell back-ward; and when he was in Death's Prison, he forc'd it to obey him. And shall not he, now that he is exalted up to the highest Heavens, in the Glory of his Triumph, have the same Command and Power over Death, the World, and Hell? When he walked upon the Waters, he cried to his Apostles, *It is I, be not afraid*, Joh. 6. How much rather may he speak to us in this manner, now that he sits upon the Throne, that can never be mov'd? *Christian Soul*, who trembles at the Approaches of Death, imagine that the Lord Jesus crown'd with Glory, calls to thee from Heaven. Fear not, for I call thee, and hold out unto thee my Arms, I that am thy Saviour and Redeemer, who have satisfied for all thy Sins with my Blood, and who have redeemed thee from the Curse of the Law, and eternal Damnation. I have disarm'd God's Justice, vanquish'd Hell, broken the Serpent's Head, and swallow'd up Death in Victory. I have purchas'd for thee the Glories of Heaven, and the Delights of Paradise. I have trampled upon the World, and all its Powers. I am worshipped by all the Church triumphing in Heaven, and by Legions of Angels that fly about my Throne. I will therefore send some of them to guard thee, and when thou shalt leave the Body where thou livest as a Stranger, they shall bring up thy Soul into this magnificent Abode of Immortality, whither I am come to prepare a Place for thee.

Without doubt, if the Anchor of our Hope is fix'd within the Veil, that is in Heaven, where Jesus Christ is gone in as our Forerunner, we shall not apprehend the most contrary and boistrous Storms raised against us, by the Prince of the Powers of the Air, who works with Efficacy in the Children of Rebellion. We shall tread under-foot all the Billows of this troublesome Sea, and thro' these swelling Waves we shall march safe to our Divine Jesus. If at any time we begin to sink, and that our

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Soul is frighted, this Almighty Lord, who hath not only delivered himſelf, but is the Saviour and Deliverer of his Church, will ſpeak to us, as the Apoſtle, *O Man of little Faith, why didſt thou doubt?* Knoweſt thou not that I command the Winds, that I can ſtill the Waves, and drive away the Tempeſt? Knoweſt thou not that I have in my Hands, the Keys of Hell and of Death? When a Perſon is to go to a Place of Reſt and Happineſs, that he cannot paſs to it, but through a painful and thorny Paſſage, he marches with Reſolution and Courage, when a Friend of his is gone before, and ſtretcheth out to him his Hand to help him. Now 'tis not poſſible to attain to the Glories of Heaven, and the Joy of Paradiſe, but through the Paſſage of Death, a Paſſage very uneaſie and grievous to our preſent ſeeming; but Jeſus Chriſt, who loves us with an eternal Love, hath gone through this Paſſage before us. He is paſt from this World to the Father, he is gone to his God, and to our God. And that we might go to him, he hath ſent the Light of his Holy Word to direct us, *John* 2. He vouchſafes to us his Staff and his Rod to comfort us. *Pſal.* 23. and ſtretcheth out the right Hand of his almighty Power, to cauſe us to paſs from Death to Life; *Where I am*, ſaith he, *there ſhall alſo my ſervants be*, John 12.

When the Apoſtles went up to *Jeruſalem*, and Jeſus went before them, *Mark* 9. they were terrified and frighted; but we that go up to the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and tread upon the Footſteps of this mighty Saviour, ought to be full of Boldneſs and chriſtian Confidence.

This great God and Saviour reigns in Heaven, he commands in the Earth, the Sea, and the Deep, therefore we may die without Fear, and with an holy Joy. For who would not rejoyce to enter into the glorious Palace of Immortality, where we ſhall ſee, not only the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, Martyrs, the holy and bleſſed Virgin, with all the Saints of Paradiſe, but we ſhall ſee, Face to Face, our great God and Saviour Jeſus

Christ, whom so many Kings and Prophets have desired to see and hear? While we remain in these Bodies, we are absent from this victorious Lord; therefore we rather desire to be absent from the Body, and to be with Christ. This Consideration causeth the holy Apostle to confess, *That his Desire was to depart and to be with Christ, which was far better for him*, Phil. 15.

The Queen of *Sheba* left her Kingdom, and came from a Corner of the Earth to see King *Solomon*, who was but a Type of Christ, and who had but a little of his Wisdom and Glory; and is there any Treasure on Earth, any Honour in this Age, or Pleasure in this Life, that might hinder us from going to see our Saviour Jesus Christ? When he was in his Infancy, the Shepherds left their Flocks, and made haste towards *Bethlehem*, to look upon him, the wise Men came from the East to adore him; and if he were yet on Earth, we should undertake a tedious Pilgrimage to the Ends of the World, and part with our dearest Enjoyments to see him. But the little Village of *Bethlehem*, is nothing in Comparison of the celestial *Jerusalem*; and what is the Sight of the Lord Jesus in swaddling Cloaths, lying in a Manger, and in the Arms of his blessed Mother, in Comparison of the Sight of a Christ cloathed with Light, crowned with Glory, and sitting at the right Hand of God the Father, upon a magnificent Throne, worshipped by all the Angels, and the glorified Spirits. The Father of the Faithful was transported with Joy, when he saw in Spirit the Day of the Lord; and the Spouse in the *Canticles* was exceeding glad when she heard him knocking at her Door; and old *Simeon* was ravish'd above Measure when he beheld Christ in his Arms; how much more shall we be transported and ravish'd into Admiration and Joy, when we shall look upon him as he is now in the highest Glory, and rais'd to the most magnificent State, and when we shall enjoy him never to leave him again; When St. *Stephen* beheld the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ sitting at the right Hand of God the Father, his Face became radiant as that of an Angel. Therefore how

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luminous and ſhining ſhall our Countenances be, when we ſhall enter into theſe Places of Light, and behold Face to Face this bleſſed Redeemer for ever.

When old *Jacob* heard that *Joſeph* was alive and reigning in *Egypt*, whom he had ſo tenderly loved, and for whom he had ſhed ſo many Tears, he was paſſionately deſirous to ſee again this dear Son, and to be Witneſs of his Glory; *It is enough*, ſaith he, *Joſeph is yet alive; I will go and ſee him before I die*, Gen. 45. And what think you, believing Souls, when you underſtand that your true *Joſeph*, whom you heartily love, lives and reigns above in Heaven, and that he is there worſhipped by all the glorified Spirits? Do not you earneſtly deſire to ſee his Face, and to behold his Divine Glory and Happineſs? This old Father was weak and feeble through Age, and oppreſſed with Grief, but his Spirit reviv'd when he ſaw the Waggons that *Joſeph* had ſent to fetch him; and you, my chriſtian Brethren, when old Age and Sickneſs have weakned your Bodies, and Grief and Diſpleaſure have undermined your Hearts, do not you feel your ſelves revive when Death draws near, and you perceive with the Eye of Faith, the Horſes and Chariots which Chriſt hath ſent to carry you away to the Paradiſe of his Glory? *Joſeph* received his Father and Brethren with Tears of Joy, and all the Houſe of *Pharaoh* rang with outward Expreſſions of Gladneſs; with what Joy, with what Kindneſſes and Love will Chriſt embrace us, what Rejoicing will there be in Heaven at your Arrival? It is not to be expreſſed but with the Tongues of Angels. *Joſeph* fed his Father and his Brethren, but he never yielded up unto them any Part of his Glory: Whereas our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who excels *Joſeph* as much in Power and Magnificence, as in Love and Mercy, ſhall not only feed us with the Bread of his Kingdom, and give us to drink of the Rivers of his Pleaſures, but he will alſo impart unto us ſome of his Glory and Splendor, as he promiſed to his Apoſtles, *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed*

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unto me, Luk 22. *To him that overcometh, I will grant to ſit with me in my Throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne. Be thou faithful until Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*, Rev. 3. *Joſeph*'s Brethren, notwithſtanding his Dignity and Power became Slaves, but Jeſus Chriſt will place upon our Head a Crown of pure Gold. *Joſeph* could not defend his Brethren from Death, they all died one after another, and he alſo in his Time yielded up the Ghoſt: But Jeſus Chriſt, who is riſen from the dead, dieth no more, Death hath no more Dominion over him; ſo that he lives for ever and ever, and will cauſe us all to become immortal. Therefore inſtead of deſiring, as *Jacob*, to live to go down into *Egypt* to ſee his Son *Joſeph*, we ſhould earneſtly deſire to die, that we might aſcend up into Heaven, there to behold our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, our Father and Redeemer. When *Jacob* embraced again this wonderful and beloved Child, in the exceeding Tranſport of his Joy and Love, he burſt out into this kind of Language, *Let me die, now that I have ſeen again thy Face, and that thou art alive.* On the contrary, when we ſhall embrace Chriſt in his Glory, when we ſhall behold his divine Countenance, we ſhall ſpeak in another manner, my Lord, and my God, ſince I now ſee thee alive, and reigning in Heaven, I ſhall live alſo, and reign with thee for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer and Meditation for a believing Soul, which arms it ſelf againſt the Fears of Death, by meditating on the glorious Aſcenſion of Jeſus Chriſt into Heaven, and his Sitting at the Right-hand of God.

O *Holy and Divine Saviour, I have often looked upon thy generous Behaviour and glorious Victories, to ſtrengthen my ſelf againſt all Apprehenſions of Death; but if thou wilt render my Joy moſt perfect and accompliſhed, grant me Grace to meditate upon thy divine Triumph. As thou haſt been engaged in many Encounters for my ſake, and haſt vouchſafed to me a Share in thy Victory, grant me alſo a Share in thy glorious Aſcenſion and Triumph. As thou haſt ſuffered for my Sins, and art riſen again for my Juſtification, thou art alſo aſcended up into Heaven to prepare a Place for me. Thou art willing that I ſhould be admitted into thy noble and divine Palace; that I ſhould be where thou art, that I may behold thy Glory, which thou haſt enjoyed with God the Father, before the Creation of the World. O ſweet and merciful Lord, what Cauſe have I to fear to go to Heaven, ſince thou art there ſeated in the higheſt Glory and Felicity, and ſtretcheſt out thy merciful Hand to receive me? Have I not good Reaſon to expect to be glorified in thy Kingdom, ſince thou thy ſelf doſt beſtow upon thoſe that ſerve thee, immortal Crowns and Scepters? O great God and Saviour, thy Throne is ſurrounded with Glory and Splendor; nevertheleſs, I will draw near unto it with Boldneſs; for 'tis a Throne of Love, and a Throne of Mercy, unto which every penitent Sinner may come. Round about this glorious Throne, I ſee a Rainbow of an Emerald Colour, that certifies me that my Covenant is everlaſting. When thy Glory and Majeſty increaſed, thy Love for me was not diminiſhed, and thy Compaſſions and Goodneſs were always alike. Thou art the ſame Yeſterday, and to Day, and thou ſhalt always be the ſame for ever. Thou haſt been pleaſed for my Salvation to lie in a Manger,*

and

and to be nailed to a Cross. Thou hast given thy Soul for my Ransom, and hast spilt thy precious Blood to wash and cleanse me from my Sins, and to mark me a Way, that I might enter into thine holy Sanctuary. In the Midst of all that Glory and Light with which thou art now cloathed, thou hast not thought it a scorn to acknowledge me for thy Brother, and for a Member of thy mystical Body. 'Tis for my sake that thou appearest before thine heavenly Father; and 'tis for me that thou offerest up unto him Prayers and Supplications. O wonderful Lord, 'tis in thy Power to give me the Things which thou hast merited by thy Sufferings, and which thou desirest for me by thy Prayers and Intercession; for all Power is given unto thee in Heaven and in Earth. O Sovereign Monarch of the whole World, hast thou not made us this great and gracious Promise, when I shall be lifted up from the Earth, I shall draw all Men after me? *And is it not for us, that thou hast prayed in this excellent manner,* Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me? *Since therefore thou hast left this wretched Earth, to go and reign above in Heaven, take unto thee my Soul, O wonderful Redeemer, and deliver it from this Valley of Tears and Misery. Cause it to understand at the Time of its Departure these Words of Joy and eternal Comfort,* Verily I say unto thee, this Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. *Lord Jesus, draw me with the Cords of thy Mercy and Grace, and I shall run after thee. And in regard I must of necessity pass through Death to come to thee the Prince of Life and Immortality, give me Grace to consider it in the same manner as the Prophet* Elias *did the fiery Chariot that lifted him up to Heaven; or as* Jacob *did the Waggon that carried him into* Egypt, *to his Son that reigned there. This holy Father in a Transport of Joy cried out,* Let me see my Son *Joseph* again, and then let me die. *But when I shall be ravish'd with an unspeakable and glorious Joy, I shall speak in another manner: Let me die that I may behold my true* Joseph, *the*

Soul

Soul of my Soul, the Light of Life, the Author of my Glory and Happineſs. O ſweet Jeſus, I ſhall freely and willingly leave this wretched and infirm Dwelling, to enter into thy heavenly Palace, to behold thy Glory and Magnificence. O King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, when ſhall I hear that divine Wiſdom that drops from thy Lips? When ſhall I ſee thee ſeated upon the Throne of thy Glorious Majeſty, where a thouſand Thouſands wait upon thee, and ten Millions worſhip thee? When ſhall I enter into the glorious Company of Saints and bleſſed Spirits that ſing forth thy Praiſes, and caſt at thy Feet their precious Crowns? O victorious Monarch, who art now in thy Kingdom, enjoying a perfect Happineſs, forget not thy poor Servant, be not unmindful of thy Son or Daughter, who am now overwhelmed with the Sorrow of this miſerable Life, and the Anguiſh of Death. Let not the Songs of the holy Angels, and the Applauſes of all the glorified Spirits hinder thee from liſtning to my Sighs and Groans. O Almighty and merciful Lord, look upon me with the Eyes of thy Love, and reach unto me thine helping Hand. Send to me thine Angels of Light, to receive my Soul, and protect me from the Angels of Darkneſs that endeavour to deſtroy me, and to drag me headlong into Hell. Let ſome of thoſe glorious Spirits that wait for thine Orders, and fly at thy Command, deliver me from Death, and carry me upon their Wings into thy Boſom. I ſee the Heavens open, and Jeſus Chriſt ſitting at the right Hand of God the Father. Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

The Seventh Consolation against the Fears of Death, is our strict and inseparable Union with Jesus Christ, by the Means of his Holy Spirit, and the first Fruits of our blessed Immortality.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ is not only alive, and triumphs in Heaven, but 'tis from thence our Life, our Glory, and our blessed Immortality proceed. For as the Father hath Life in himself; he hath also given to the Son to have Life in himself; and as the Father raiseth and quickeneth the Dead, likewise the Son quickeneth whomsoever he Will. So that we may not only say to him as St. *Peter*, *Thou hast the Words of eternal Life*, John 9. but we may justly speak to him in *David*'s Language, *with thee is the Fountain of Life, in thy Light shall we see Light*, Psal. 36. Therefore all those that are united and incorporated into this Prince of Life, participate of the Fulness of his Holy Spirit, and by that Means they become Partakers of Immortality and Happiness. Now by the Virtue of Christ's Death and Passion, we are not only made Partakers of the Fruits of his Sufferings, but we are united to, and incorporated in him; so that by that means we have obtain'd not only the great and precious Promises of Glory and Immortality, which he hath purchased for us, by the infinite Merits of his Sufferings; but we receive the First-fruits and Fore-tastes of our future Blessedness.

He that is lifted up and dwells on high, quickens the Spirits of the Humble, *Isa.* 57. he dwells in our Hearts by Faith, *Ephes.* 3. 1. He pours into our Souls his holy and quickening Spirit: For because we are the Children of God, he hath sent the Spirit of his Son into

into our Hearts to cry, *Abba*, Father, *Gal.* 4. Whoſoever hath not this Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, he is none of his. By the Means of this Spirit he dwells in us, and we in him; we become Members of his Body; and we may boaſt, that we are his Fleſh and his Bones.

All Things that are moſt ſtrictly united by Nature or Art, are employ'd to repreſent this admirable Union, *Joh.* 6. which we enjoy with Jeſus Chriſt, by the means of his Spirit that quickens us, *Rom.* 13. From hence are derived theſe Expreſſions of the holy Apoſtle, *We have put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Gal. 3. And that *when we draw near to him who is the living Stone, rejected of Men, but lifted up, and of great Price with God*, 1 Pet. 2. *We, like ſo many living Stones, are built up together to make a ſpiritual Houſe*: For the ſame Reaſon our Saviour informs us, *Joh.* 15. *That he is the Tree, and that we are the Branches.* And St. *Paul* aſſures us, that if we are become one Plant with him, by the Conformity of his Death, we ſhall alſo be one by the Reſemblance of his Reſurrection, *Rom.* 6.

To expreſs to us, that this ſacred Union contains many Ties of Love, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is repreſented as our Brother, our Father, and our Bridegroom; therefore the Apoſtle tells us, that he thinks it no Diſgrace to own us for his Brethren, in ſaying, *Heb.* 1. *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren*; and alſo where he informs us, *Rom.* 8. that *God hath predeſtinated us to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the Firſt-born among many Brethren.* And after his Reſurrection, he ſpeaks thus to *Mary Magdalen*, Joh. 20. *Touch me not, for I am not yet aſcended to my Father; but go to my Brethren and ſay unto them, I aſcend unto my Father, and to your Father, and to my God, and to your God*, Heb. 2. Therefore this glorious Redeemer, ſhewing himſelf unto God with all the Elect, ſaith, *Here I am, and the Children which thou haſt given me*, Hoſ. 2. And by the Mouth of *Hoſea* he ſpeaks to his Church, and makes this Promiſe to her, *I will betroth thee unto me for ever*;

yea,

yea, I will betroth thee unto me in Righteousness, and in Judgment, and in Loving kindness, and in Mercies. From hence 'tis, that this Church is called *the Spouse of the Lamb*, in the *Revelations*; and in the *Canticles* the spiritual Union betwixt Christ and his Church, is expressed by a continual Allusion to a Marriage between a Man and his Wife.

And because our Meat and Drink are turned into our Body and Substance, Jesus Christ assures us, *That his Flesh is truly Meat, and his Blood is truly Drink; that he is the true Bread come down from Heaven, that gives Life to the World, and whosoever shall eat him, shall live for ever.*

But amongst all the Similitudes borrowed to represent our Union with Jesus Christ by his holy Spirit, there is none employ'd more frequently in holy Scripture, than that of the human Body, for there is not any more proper for us. All the Spirits that give Life and Motion, proceed from the Head, and as soon as the Members are separated from it, they die. In like manner, the Spirit that quickens us, and makes us become new Creatures, proceeds from Jesus Christ; so that whosoever is separated from this Head, he falls into Death and eternal Destruction. And as there are many Members, nevertheless they make up but one Body, because they are all animated with the same Spirit, and they are kept alive by the same Head: So there be many Members belonging to Christ's mystical Body, some in Combats yet upon Earth, and others glorified in Heaven, nevertheless they make up but one only mystical and spiritual Body; for they are quickened by the same Spirit, and receive all the celestial Influences from the same Head. St. *Paul* teacheth us this Doctrine in express Terms, 1 *Cor.* 12. *For as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body, being many, are one Body; so also is Christ; for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be Bond or Free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* Finally, because the same Spirit

that

that is in our Lord, as in the Head and Fountain, and in the Church in General, as in the Body, which is quickned and moved, is alſo in every particular Member: The Holy Apoſtle is not ſatisfied to call this ſpiritual Body of Chriſt and his Church, Chriſt; but he tells us moreover, that whoſoever is *united unto him, is made but one Spirit with him.*

Theſe and ſuch like Repreſentations, let them be never ſo lively and noble, are but dark Shadows and imperfect Images of our Union with Jeſus Chriſt by his Holy Spirit. For the richeſt and moſt magnificent Garment can never keep off from the Body Diſeaſes, nor hinder the Approaches of Corruption that creeps upon it. There is no Foundation ever ſo firm and well ſettled, that can free the Houſe built upon it, from the Ruins and Breaches of Time and Weather. Altho' the Sap mounts up from the Root of the Vine, and runs into the Twigs and Branches, they wither at laſt, and are caſt into the Fire. The rareſt Meats, and the moſt delicious Drinks, can never make our Bodies become immortal; Death ſnatcheth away the Brother from the Brother, the Father from the Child, and the Wife from her Husband. The Stroke of the Sword can ſeparate a Body from the healthieſt and ſtrongeſt Head; nay, without any ſuch Violence, the Head dies as well as the Body, and the Spirits that run in our Veins are far from hindring the Corruption of our Bodies; for they corrupt of themſelves and vaniſh away. In ſhort, the ſtricteſt Unions of Nature and Art are diſſolved by Time, ſo that all Things under the Sun are ſubject to Vanity and Inconſtancy. But the Spirit of our Lord Jeſus is the Principle of an eternal Life, and the Seed of an incorruptible Glory. Whoſoever is united to him by this Spirit, nothing can ſeparate him from Chriſt, neither Life nor Death, nor Hell, nor the World, nor Things preſent, nor Things to come. There-

fore our Blessed Saviour could find nothing here upon Earth, nor amongst all the Creatures worthy and able to represent this perfect and inseparable Union: He seeks an Image of it beyond all natural Beings in the Holy Trinity; in that unchangeable Union which was, which is, and which shall ever be, between him and God the Father. As we may see in his excellent Prayer, *John* 17. *Father, I pray for them all which shall believe in me, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us, that they may be even one as we are one.* Banish therefore from your Minds all Fear, believing Souls: For all the Three Persons of the most holy, most glorious, and most wonderful Trinity, are engaged for your Salvation, to bring you to your eternal Happiness. The Father by his infinite Wisdom hath found out a Means to reconcile us to himself, to satisfie his offended Justice, and to declare the Riches of his unparallel'd Mercies. The Son hath purchased for us this great Salvation, by suffering the shameful Death of the Cross, and by spilling his most precious Blood for the Forgiveness of our Sins; and the Holy Spirit, by incorporating us into Jesus Christ, makes us Partakers of the infinite Mercies of his Sufferings, *Revel.* 2. That is the true Hyssop that sprinkles the divine Blood of the Lamb without Spot or Blemish, to cleanse our Souls. 'Tis he that gives us the white Stone, where the new Name of *Elect* and *Believer* is written, *Heb.* 12. Which none knows but he that hath it; he gives to eat of the hidden *Manna*, and of the Food of Angels, *John* 4. which the World knoweth not. 'Tis instead of a precious Ring or Jewel, by which our spiritual Bridegroom promiseth and confirms to us his conjugal Faith. 'Tis the Seal of the Living God, that seals us to the Covenant of Grace, and the Promises

miſes of Glory and Happineſs made to us in the Goſpel, as the Apoſtle himſelf tells us, *Eph.* 1. that now having believed the Goſpel of our Salvation, *we have been ſealed by the ſpirit of Promiſe.* Therefore he exhorts us, *Eph.* 4. *Not to grieve the holy Spirit of God, by whom we have been ſealed for the Day of Redemption.* Finally, this is the Spirit that witneſſeth with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God; *If we be Children, we are Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* Rom. 8.

Think not, Chriſtian Souls, that I deſign to perſwade you that this holy Spirit of our Lord Jeſus ſhall come and whiſper in your Ears, or call unto you from within, that you are the Children of God, as the extravagant Quakers amongſt us imagine. The Teſtimony that he gives to our Spirits, is a real and an effectual Teſtimony, if I may ſo ſpeak, for he regenerates us, and makes us become new Creatures; he gives a more certain Aſſurance of his Adoption, than if he did declare from Heaven, *Thou art my Child, and thy Name is written in the Book of Life.* As the Seal imprints its Image in the Wax, thus the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus imprints in our Souls the Image of Holineſs and divine Virtues. Now as the Figure that remains upon the Wax, makes us judge, without diſpute, what manner of Seal made the Impreſſion; likewiſe when you find God's Image printed in your Hearts, acknowledge the Finger of God, and the Virtue of his holy Spirit to have been there. For none can have that bleſſed Image, but he muſt needs be the Child of God. The holy Spirit that gives it to our Souls, kindles in us the bleſſed Flames of holy Love, and produceth in us Tongues of Fire; he makes us ſpeak to God with Boldneſs as to our Father, and lift up our Eyes to Heaven with Joy and Gladneſs, as to the Place of our Inheritance. All the Goods of this preſent Life may be, nay, will be loſt at laſt,

Prov. 23. Riches take Wings and fly away like an Eagle, Honour vaniſheth away as Smoak carried away with the Wind, earthly Delights and Pleaſures haſte away as a Torrent, or the Waters of a River that ſlide along the Banks, and they end at laſt in a Sea of Bitterneſs and Sorrow. If by chance theſe Vanities continue with the Worldlings, while they remain on Earth, *Pſal.* 49. they can continue no longer; for they are ſtript of them at the Grave. Their Riches and their Honours are not buried with them, and all their unſettled Delights fly away with their Breath. But Death hath no Power upon this Spirit of Life, which is our true Treaſure, our Glory and everlaſting Delight.

Again, the true and lively Faith, that embraceth Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour, ſhall ceaſe, and Hope that conſiders the Advantages to come, ſhall one Day be aboliſhed. We are in this earthly Pilgrimage, we walk by Faith, and not by Sight, and while we are toſt up and down upon this dangerous Sea of the World, *Heb.* 6. we have Need of the Anchor of our Hope, and to expect with Patience the Fulfilling of that we hope for, *Rom.* 8. But when we ſhall come to our heavenly Country, we ſhall have no need of a Staff to walk with, nor of a Shield to defend us, and to quench the fiery Darts of the Devil. When we ſhall be ſecure in the Haven of Eternity, we ſhall have no Occaſion to make uſe of this Anchor, for our Hope ſhall be changed into a perfect Fruition. When we ſhall be in Paradiſe, we ſhall need no Wings to carry us up to God, but only to fly about his Throne, as the Seraphims. In ſhort, we ſhall need no Looking-glaſs, to ſee the Glory of God, for we ſhall behold him Face to Face. All that we believe at preſent without ſeeing, we ſhall then ſee, and believe no more. But the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, whom the World knoweth not, and cannot receive, is not given us for a Time, but to

dwell

dwell in us for ever. As the Humanity which our Lord took from us was never caſt off, nor ever ſhall be; thus the Spirit which he hath given us ſhall never be taken from us. The Humanity which our Saviour united in the Perſon of the Divine Word, hath been glorified by this eternal Union, but the Spirit which he hath united to our Spirits, by this gracious Union, is the Foundation of Glory, and of our eternal Happineſs.

The Spirit of Life is not only the Seal of the Promiſes of God, but alſo the Earneſt of our incorruptible Inheritance, reſerv'd for us in Heaven. This is St. *Paul*'s Doctrine, *Eph.* 1. for when he had ſaid, *You have been ſealed by the Holy Spirit of Promiſe*, he adds, *which is the Earneſt of our Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchaſed Poſſeſſion, unto the Praiſe of his Glory.* Becauſe this Divine Spirit is the Seal of the Living God, he is the Earneſt of his Inheritance. For this Heavenly Image that it imprints in our Souls, ſhall be Part of that Glory with which he will crown us in his holy Paradiſe. Therefore the Wiſdom that is veracious in every reſpect, doth not call this Spirit, a Pledge or Gage, but an Earneſt. For tho' both be given as a Confirmation of Promiſes, and an Aſſurance of their Accompliſhment, there is the Difference, that Men commonly take back again the Thing engag'd when that which is promiſed is done; but the Earneſt remains always and is Part of the Sum to be paid. As therefore the Earneſt which is given, is never taken away, but Men commonly add to it the remaining Sum promiſed; likewiſe our Saviour never takes away from his Elect the Spirit of Adoption, which hath been once beſtowed upon them, but he encreaſeth its Graces and Advantages, until he hath raiſed them to the higheſt Glory, and moſt divine Happineſs which he hath promiſed.

'Tis in this Caſe as with the Sun, which as ſoon

as it appears upon our Horizon, increaſeth the Light more and more, until it aſcends up to our Meridian: Or as the Streams and Rivers, which the farther they run, the more they increaſe, until they come to the Sea: Therefore when our Lord and Saviour ſpeaks of this Spirit of Grace, which ſuch as believe in him receive, he tells the *Jews*, John. 7. *He that believeth in me, Rivers of living Water ſhall flow from his Belly.* And to the *Samaritan* Woman he ſpeaks in this Language, *John* 4. *He that ſhall drink of the Water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt; but the Water that I ſhall give him, ſhall become in him a Fountain of Water ſpringing to eternal Life.* This was ſometimes ſhewn in a Viſion to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Ezek. 47. by the Waters that ran down from the Sanctuary; for at the firſt they reach'd no higher than the Prophet's Ankle Bones, afterwards they roſe up to his Knee, and then to his Middle; at laſt they increaſed in ſuch a manner, that they became a great Torrent, and a deep River which was not to be forded over, and which diſcharged it ſelf into the Sea.

As *David*, in the Beginning of his Reign, commanded but one Tribe, but afterwards he enlarged the Limits of his Kingdom over all the Tribes of *Iſrael*, that ſmall Portion of the Kingdom was not then taken from him, but only encreaſed and became greater. Thus it is with us during this Life, we have a ſmall part of the Kingdom of Heaven intruſted in our Hands; or if I may ſo ſay, we have now ſome Jewels of the incorruptible Crown, which is promiſed hereafter. This Part ſhall not be taken from us, this bright Beam of our future Glory ſhall never be put out but in the Life to come. We ſhall poſſeſs as much of this Kingdom as we are able, and ſhall be cloathed with all the Light and Splendor of the heavenly Glory.

But as there is no Compariſon ever ſo juſt, but

is wanting in ſome Reſpects, there is no ſmall Difference in this; for the Tribe of *Judah* was the nobleſt and richeſt Part of the Kingdom of *Iſrael*; but that Part which our Souls enjoy at preſent, of the Happineſs and Glory of the Kingdom of Heaven, is but as a Drop of Water in Compariſon of the Ocean; or as a weak Ray of Light, in compariſon of the Sun, 2 *Cor.* 12. Therefore the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, who had been raviſh'd into the third Heaven, and who knew better than any Man in the World, what were the Joys and Glories of Heaven, when he mentions this Spirit of Adoption that God ſends into our Hearts, he calls it, *Rom.* 8. *The firſt Fruits of his Spirit*: To teach us, that there is as vaſt a difference between the Meaſure of the Gifts and Graces which we receive here below, and the overflowing Abundance which we ſhall enjoy in Heaven, as between ſome few Ears of Corn, and the whole Harveſt of a Field. 'Tis like the ſmall Quantity of Fruits which were brought to the Children of *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, compared to the great Abundance of all the Land of *Canaan*. 'Tis like ſome ſmall Crumbs of the heavenly Bread, of which we ſhall have our fill in the Kingdom of God; or as ſome ſmall Drops of that new Wine which we ſhall drink for ever in the heavenly *Jeruſalem*.

Therefore, believing Souls, you may from hence conclude, that the Approaches of Death ought not to ſcare nor fright you, becauſe that you have within you the Principles of a Life everlaſting, and the Seeds of a glorious Immortality, which cannot be taken from you. Jeſus Chriſt doth not only wait for you, and ſtretch out unto you his Arms, to receive you into his Reſt; but he himſelf is alſo with you, and will render the Paſſage more eaſie and pleaſant to this new World, where Juſtice and Righteouſneſs dwell, *Joh.* 11. He will work Mi-

racles for your ſake, and if you believe, you ſhall ſee the Glory of God, *Joſhua* 3. We do not only follow the Footſteps of this divine and true *Joſhua*, but we paſs over with him, and he paſſeth over with us, *Exod.* 19. We are not like the Children of *Iſrael*, that went through the River of *Jordan*, whilſt the Prieſts held the Ark in the Middle of the River, but we may be compared to the Prieſts themſelves, 1 *Pet.* 2. that did bear the Ark of the Covenant, and cauſed the Waters to return back to the Spring again. For we are a Generation of Prieſts, and we bear in our Souls the Lord Jeſus, in whom the Fulneſs of the Godhead dwells bodily, and in whom are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge. In ſhort, our Souls return to God, the Fountain from whence they came. Let therefore that heavenly Voice which was heard in the holy Land, ſound in our Ears, *Iſa.* 43. *Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy Name, thou art mine. When thou paſſeſt through the Waters, I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee. When thou walkeſt through the Fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the Flame kindle upon thee.* And ſay with *David*, *When I ſhould walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I ſhall fear no Evil, for thou art with me; thy Staff and thy Rod ſhall comfort me*, Pſal. 23.

It ſeems the primitive Chriſtians had a Deſign to ſhew us this Truth by the Picture of a Giant-like Man, wading through the Sea with a Staff in his Hand, and a Child upon his Shoulder. For this Giant is the Emblem of a Chriſtian, who lifts up his Mind as high as Heaven. The Sea ſignifies the Dangers of this World, and the Fears of Death. The Staff repreſents Faith, that keeps us up in our paſſage through Life and Death, upon which, when we lean, we worſhip the living God of Heaven and Earth, and the Child is an Image of Chriſt;

Chriſt; therefore he that bears him, is called *Chriſtophorus*, that is, *He that bears Chriſt*. *Cæſar* could not endure to ſee his Pilot tremble in a furious Storm at Sea, becauſe he was in his Boat. We have far leſs Reaſon to be afraid, ſince we carry in our Hearts the great Emperor and Monarch of the World, the Hope and Comfort of *Iſrael*. *Cæſar* was as much in Danger as his Pilot to make Shipwrack, but our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath all the Winds at his Command. He can ſtill the moſt diſturbed Sea, and through the moſt terrible Death, he can cauſe us to paſs and arrive at the ſafe Haven of eternal Reſt, and of a moſt happy and glorious Life.

When *David* ſhewed himſelf with a Purpoſe to fight with *Goliah*, he ſpoke to this dreadful *Philiſtine* in this manner, *I come unto thee in the Name of the Lord of Hoſts, the God of the Armies of* Iſrael. But you, Chriſtian Souls, when you are to encounter with Death, you may ſay ſo to it, not only I come to thee in the Name of him who commands Legions of Angels, and all the Armies of immortal Spirits; but I come to thee cloathed with his Armour, ſtrengthened by his holy Spirit, and aſſiſted by him in Perſon. For Jeſus Chriſt, who hath overcome Death for us, intends to overcome it by us. We are the living Stones which he hath choſen of his wonderful Grace and Mercy, to bring down that proud inſulting Enemy, that cauſeth all Worldlings to tremble, and cover their Faces with Shame and Confuſion, *Judg.* 6.

We have ſeen a *Sampſon* breaking in Pieces, with an admirable Strength, the Cords with which he had been bound by the *Philiſtines*, and tearing alſo the Body of a young Lion, in which he found a few Days after, Honey moſt pleaſant to his Taſte. It will be much eaſier for us, when we ſhall be ſtrengthened with the divine Virtue of the Lord Jeſus,

Jeſus, of whom *Sampſon* was but a Type, to tear in pieces all the Cords and Chains of Death. We ſhall rent in pieces the Body of this old Lion, and when we ſhall ſearch into his Bowels with a ſerious and repeated Meditation, we ſhall find the ſweeteſt and moſt raviſhing Comforts.

As when the Prophet *Elias* was carried up to Heaven in a fiery Chariot, he let fall his Cloak, with which *Eliſha* ſeparated the Waters of *Jordan*, ſo that he paſſed through the River on Foot: Likewiſe our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt being aſcended up above the Clouds, to the Throne of his Glory, he hath left us the precious Cloak of his Righteouſneſs; he hath granted us his Holy Spirit, that we might paſs through the turbulent Waves of this tempeſtuous Sea of the World, by its divine Virtue, and that through Death we might enter into immortal Life.

And as the Death of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſeparated his Soul from his Body, although his innocent Soul and holy Body remained always united perſonally to his Divinity: In the ſame manner the Believer's Death diſunites, for a time, his Soul from his Body, but it can never ſeparate it from the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, that is the Soul of our Souls, and ſuch an holy Flame, that it can never be extinguiſhed.

When the High-Prieſt of the *Jews* put off his prieſtly Ornaments, he caſt off at the ſame time his Breaſt-plate, where the Names of the twelve Tribes were engraven, *Exod.* 20. Not only our Names are writtten in the Lamb's Book of Life, not only our Pictures are printed upon the Palms of his Hands with the Blood of the Covenant, but we are as a Signet upon his Heart, *Cant.* 1. ſo that we cannot be ſeparated from him, any more than his Heart can be taken from him. His Love is ſtronger than Death, and his Embraces are Embraces of Love.

Ruth promiſed to *Naomi*, that Death alone ſhould be able to ſeparate them, *Ruth* 1. But on the contrary, we may tell our Lord and Saviour, who is as our Father, Brother and Husband, not only Death ſhall never be able to ſeparate us, but it ſhall rather bring us nearer to thee, and cauſe us to reſt in thy Boſom, where we ſhall be for ever ſatisfied with thine Heavenly Delights. Chriſtians, you need not fear Death, for you are not to be wounded by all its Darts, for you have been dipt in the River that ſprings to eternal Life. The Spirit of the Lord Jeſus that is in you, is the Spirit of Life, the Beginning of Immortality, and the only Spring of eternal Glory and Happineſs. Since the Breath of the Prophet *Elias* rais'd a dead Body to Life, the Spirit and Breath of the Father and the Son, will be able to keep your ſpiritual Life from decaying; unleſs it be in Death's Power to ſtop the Breath of the Almighty, unleſs it be able to limit the Beams of Light and Glory that come from his Divine Countenance; unleſs it can cauſe the Rivers of living Water that ſpring out of his Throne, to ceaſe and dry up; 'tis not poſſible that it ſhould cauſe us to periſh, and render us miſerable. Therefore you are certain of your Eternal Happineſs, while Jeſus ſhall be the Author and Well-ſpring of Light, Life, Glory and Immortality; and that his Holy Spirit ſhall be victorious over Death and Hell; and you may ſing with *David*, *I ſhall not die, but live and declare the Works of the Lord*, Pſal. 118.

You are not only ſure of this Glory and eternal Happineſs; and you are not only entred in Poſſeſſion of it by your Faith and Hope, but you begin already to enjoy it and its Firſt-Fruits. For he that believes in Jeſus Chriſt, is paſs'd from Death to Life, and whoſoever hath the Son of God, hath eternal Life. As the Prophet *Moſes*, when he was in the Wilderneſs, ſaw not only afar off the *Land of*

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Promiſe, but he taſted of its delicious Fruits: Thus we don't only behold afar off with the Eye of Faith, our celeſtial Inheritance, but we taſte at preſent, and reliſh ſome of its bleſſed Delights. And as the Fruits brought by the Spies, were the ſame and like to them that the Children of *Iſrael* fed upon in the *promiſed Land:* In like manner, the Fruits that we reliſh in the Wilderneſs of this World, are Fruits of the Tree of Life, with which we ſhall be fully ſatisfied in Heaven. For the Grace that God beſtows upon us here below by his divine Spirit, is the Beginning of Glory, with which he ſhall crown us above. The ſame Light that ſhines upon our Souls on Earth, ſhall ſhine brighter for ever in Heaven. But whereas we look upon it at preſent, as it were through a black Miſt with much Imperfection, then we ſhall ſee it clearly without Veil or Darkneſs. The ſame Holineſs that adorns at preſent our Souls, ſhall be their Ornament and Glory; then it ſhall appear without Spot or Blemiſh. That ſame Peace of Conſcience that preſerves our Hearts and Senſes, ſhall be without the leaſt Diſturbance. In ſhort, the ſame Jeſus that is conceived in our Hearts, and that is formed and grown in us by Degrees, ſhall then appear in a perfect Stature, that ſhall want no more Increaſe.

As 'tis with the Sea, it enters into the Rivers before the Rivers can run to the Sea; in like manner God comes to us before we go to him, and Heaven enters into our Souls before we can enter into Heaven.

Aged *Simeon* waited patiently for Death; but as ſoon as he had ſeen the Saviour of the World, and embraced him, he ran to meet Death. He thought upon nothing but his latter End, therefore he pray'd to God, moſt earneſtly, to receive him into his glorious Reſt. O Chriſtian Soul, how ſhouldſt thou diſpoſe and prepare thy ſelf to die, ſince thou beholdeſt,

holdeſt, with the Eyes of Faith, this bleſſed Redeemer, not wrapped up in Swaddling-cloaths, but crown'd with an infinite Glory and Light; he is not in thine Arms, but he lodges in thine Heart; thou haſt not received him, to return or part with him again, but to be united to him for ever, and to be incorporated into his myſtical Body. Since therefore Death brings thee nearer to thy Redeemer, perfects this bleſſed Union, and caſts thee into the very Fountain of Life; inſtead of being frighted at it, and griev'd when it comes to thee, thou ſhouldſt then rejoice and be tranſported above Meaſure with Gladneſs. We ſhould meet this Death with a chearful Countenance. I mean, that we ſhould meet the Lord Jeſus, this merciful Prince of Life, who having vouchſafed to thee the Sight of his Salvation, intends to receive thee into his Reſt, and glorious Peace, who reigns above in Heaven.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Chriſtian Soul which arms it ſelf againſt the Fears of Death, by meditating on our ſtrict and inſeparable Union with Jeſus Chriſt, by his Holy Spirit, and the Firſt-Fruits in us of our Bleſſed Immortality.

O Mighty and Merciful Lord, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and Fountain of living Water, drive away from me the dark Shadow of Death, and quench all the Fires that it kindles in my Soul. Thou art not only dead for me, but thou art pleaſed to live in me, that I might one day live for ever with thee. Thou haſt of thy pure Mercy choſen me for thy Child, and haſt made me a Member of thy myſtical Body, Fleſh of thy Fleſh, Bone of the Bone, and cauſed me to be a Partaker of thine Ho-

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ly Spirit. God has given thee the Spirit without Measure, that of thy Fulness we might receive Grace for Grace. By the Means of this blessed and infinite Spirit that abides in my Soul, I am united to thee in a more perfect manner than the Tree is to the Root that bears it, or the Child to its Mother that nourisheth it in her Womb, or the Members of the humane Body to the Head that gives them Life. Ties that unite me unto thee, O glorious Saviour, are more unchangeable than the Heavens and the Earth; as nothing can pluck me out of thine Hand, there is nothing can separate me from thine Heart. Whether I live or die, I am thine, my Lord and my God, and nothing can alter thine Affection for me. Death can take me out of the World, and carry me out of the Embraces of my dearest Friends; but it can never separate me from thine holy Spirit, the Soul of my Soul, and the Light of my Life, which cannot be put out by all the envious Blasts and Storms of the Prince of Darkness: But it will rather bring me nearer to behold thy Face, to rest in thy Bosom, and unite me to thee more perfectly for ever. To whom shall I go? Thou hast the Words of eternal Life, and art the inexhaustible Fountain. Thou art my Hope and my Treasure, my Glory and mine only Happiness. O faithful and unquestionable Witness; I should be worse than an Infidel, if I questioned my future Salvation and Glory, since the Father hath not spared thee for me, tho' thou art his only beloved Son, the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person. Since thou, O merciful Lord, hast willingly suffered the most shameful Death of the Cross, and spilt thy precious Blood to wash away my Sins, and satisfie for my Crimes; and since thine holy Spirit is come into mine Heart, to make me a Partaker of that precious Blood, and seal me for the Day of Redemption. O glorious Spirit of my Saviour, that rests upon me; when I should be able to speak the Language of Angels, I could not sufficiently express the wonderful Operations that thou produceſt in my Soul. Thou kindlest in me such heavenly Flames as never go out, but are always alive, as the Fire of thine Altar. Thou formest me in a white Stone, where a new Name is written, which no

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Man knows but he that receives it. Thou giveſt me to eat of that hidden Manna, of that Food of Angels that the World knoweth not. Thou witneſſeſt with my Spirit, that I am a Child and Heir of God, and a Joynt-heir with Jeſus Chriſt the King of Kings. Thou doſt not only ſeal me the Pardon of all my Sins, but doſt alſo purifie my Conſcience from all dead Works to ſerve the living God. Thou cauſeſt me to cry out, Abba Father, *and imprinteſt in my Heart the glorious Image of my heavenly Father. Thou art the Seal of my Adoption, the Earneſt of mine incorruptible Inheritance, prepared for me in Heaven. Thou haſt given me the infallible Aſſurances of a glorious and eternal Life, and begun it already in my Soul, granting to me its Firſt-fruits. Thou cauſeſt me to behold the Sunſhine of thy Grace, and makeſt it to give Light in mine Underſtanding. Thou doſt not only vouchſafe to me the Favour of beholding from this valley of Tears thine heavenly* Canaan, *but cauſeſt me to taſte of its Fruits. I am not yet come to the Fountains of Waters that ſpring forth to eternal Life, but I taſte the Streams and Rivers that flow in me. I am not yet in thine holy Paradiſe, but thou haſt cauſed Paradiſe to be in me; Thou haſt given to me an unpeakable and glorious Joy, and haſt beſtowed upon me the Grace of God that paſſeth all Underſtanding. O living and quickning Spirit, unknown to the World! Thou ſtrengthneſt me in ſuch a manner, that Death ſhall never be able to fright me. Thou haſt united me to thy ſelf, by an unſeparable Union, O Prince of Life, and haſt put in me a Seed of Immortality, an infallible Principle of Glory, and a Source of unſpeakable Happineſs; Thou art in me to dwell with me for ever, therefore thou ſhalt fill up the Meaſure of thy moſt ſignal Favours. My Faith, by thy divine Aſſiſtance, hath ſpied out the Kingdom prepared for me from the Beginning of the World, and ſhortly I ſhall ſee with mine Eyes the inexpreſſible Beauties of that celeſtial Country, that flows with the Milk of the pureſt and ſincereſt Joys, and with the*

Honey

Honey of the ſweeteſt and moſt raviſhing Comforts. Thou haſt ſent a Fore-taſte of the Fruits of the Tree of Life, but I ſhall come into thine heavenly Paradiſe; I ſhall ever have my fill of thoſe delicious Fruits. Now thou haſt cauſed ſome Drops of the Dew of Heaven to fall upon mine Heart, but then thou wilt make me drink of the Rivers of thy divine Pleaſures. At preſent, in my painful Paſſage, in the midſt of my Groans and Tears, I may gather ſome Ear; but when I come to my heavenly Country I ſhall reap my Hands full with Songs of Joy. Here upon Earth I ſee God as in a Glaſs, obſcurely; but in Heaven I ſhall behold him Face to Face, and I ſhall be ſatisfied with his Likeneſs. My Lord and my God, who by the infinite Merits of thy Sufferings, haſt purchaſed for us this Spirit of Life, and who haſt given to my Soul ſuch an authentick Seal of my Salvation, and ſuch a precious Earneſt of thine eternal Bliſs; I feel in me the Motions and Endeavours of this new Man that ſtrives to leave this Body of Darkneſs and Death, to enter into the Light of the Living. Lord Jeſus, ſince thou haſt granted me the Spirit of thy Grace, enlightned my Soul with thy divine Knowledge, and cauſed me to know the Way of Life; ſince thou haſt given me to taſte of the heavenly Gift of the Powers of the Life to come; and haſt vouchſafed to me the Firſt-fruits of thy Glory; and that I already feel Heaven in my Soul; ſince I behold thee with the Eyes of my Faith I embrace thee with all my Affections, and that thou dwelleſt in my Heart; perfect in me the Work of thy Grace, and bring me at laſt to thine eternal Glory. Lord, now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in Peace, for mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

The Eighth Conſolation, is to conſider, that Death delivers us from all Temporal Evils that we daily ſuffer.

THere are certain Pictures with two Faces, the one repreſents moſt ugly Features, and the other beautiful and pleaſant Things. This is the true Emblem of Death; for it may be painted with a fearful Countenance, a lean Body, and Iron Hands, that raviſh us from our Goods and our Honours, and that divide our Perſons, dragging our Bodies into a loathſome Sepulchre. If we look upon Death in this manner, we cannot but tremble and fear. We may alſo look upon it as a powerful Deliverer, that unlooſeth all our Fetters, breaks our Chains to pieces, raiſeth our Souls to the higheſt Glory and Happineſs. If we conſider it thus, there is nothing more lovely than Death, and nothing more to be deſired.

I have hitherto endeavoured to ſhew how a Believer ſhall ſtrengthen and comfort himſelf againſt the Fears of Death. But now I ſhall add ſomething more, with Heaven's Aſſiſtance. I ſhall labour to prove not only that Death is to be expected without Apprehenſion, but to be received with an holy Joy; that it is not at all dreadful, but rather is to be earneſtly deſir'd. I ſhall no longer give, to ſpeak properly, any Conſolations againſt the fears of Death, for I hope to make it plain, that Death it ſelf is to be looked upon as the greateſt Conſolation and Comforter.

That I may attain my Purpoſe, I ſhall ſhew as in a Picture, a ſhort view of all the dreadful Miſeries, of which Death delivers us, and then I ſhall endea-

vour to paint out in the brighteſt Colour, or rather, I ſhall chalk out unto you the Bleſſedneſs and Glories into which it uſhers us.

Man's Life and Miſery, are Twin-Siſters that are born at the ſame time, and own *Adam* for their firſt Parent; they die together at the ſame inſtant in true Believers. We all know that Man begins his Life weeping and crying, and ends it with Sighs and Groans. We come into the World all cover'd with Blood, and we go out all over with a cold Sweat. If the Child cries not ſo ſoon as 'tis born, we judge that 'tis Dead; and when the Sick Body ceaſes to Groan and Sigh, we ſay that he is paſt Hopes. So that our crying is a token of Life, and the end of our Sighs is likewiſe an infallible ſign of our Death. Wretched Man! how miſerable is thy Condition? thy beſt Friends rejoyce at thy Crying, and they weep and lament when thou ceaſeſt to Sigh and Groan.

All the reſt of thy Time between thy Cradle and thy Grave is no happier. 'Tis but a continued chain of Miſery, a mixture of Pains, a ſucceſſion of Evils, and a Sea of Bitterneſs. As one Wave falls upon the back of another, one Evil is no ſooner gone, but another follows and threatens us. One Depth calleth another, and all manner of Floods and Storms paſs over our Heads, *Job* 5. As the Sparks riſe out of the Fire to fly up, Man is born for Miſery and Pain; and as the Wiſeſt of Kings ſpeaks, *His Days are nothing but Pain, and his Employment but trouble, in the Night his Heart reſteth not*, Eccleſ. 3. There are ſcarce any Dwellings, but Meſſengers of ill News arrive ſometimes as they did to that of *Job*, Chap. 1.

By God's unchangeable Order and Appointment the Days ſucceed the Nights, and divide the Year into two equal parts. For if the Nights are longer in one Seaſon, ſo much the ſhorter are they in another.

nother. But the Nights of our Afflictions are ſo long, that they ſeem to laſt ſeveral Ages; whereas the Days of Proſperity are ſo ſhort, that they are gone in a Moment. So that we may juſtly ſay with the Prophet *Moſes*, *The beſt of our Days are but labour and ſorrow, ſo ſoon doth our Life paſs away, and we are gone*, Pſal. 90. 'Tis as eaſie a Task to number the Stars of the Firmament, and to reckon up the Grains of Sand upon the Sea-ſhore, as to make an exact Examination of all the Evils that happen to us as Men belonging to a Civil Society, or as Members of God's Church, and his adopted Children. Therefore Old *Jacob* had cauſe to complain, that the Years of his Life had been ſo ſhort and evil, but ours are ſo evil, that they cannot be too ſhort.

I ſhould compoſe many Volumes, if I ſhould undertake to deſcribe perfectly all the Infirmities and Diſeaſes that undermine the Body, all the cutting Pains and cruel Tortures that torment and rack us.

The moſt languiſhing Sickneſſes, and the moſt violent Pains that afflict and diſturb this Body, are nothing in compariſon of the exceſſive Sadneſs and mortal Anguiſh that ſeize upon our Souls, and fill them full of Gall and Bitterneſs. I think there is no Man upon Earth that can boaſt of having paſs'd but one Day without ſome Diſpleaſure, either inward or outward. For we either feel preſent Evils, that ſtrike through our Hearts as ſo many Darts, or the Remembrance of former Griefs troubles us, or elſe the fears of future Miſchiefs vex and fret us. I may juſtly ſay, that the Devil is not ſo cruel to himſelf, as we are to our own Perſons; for this evil Spirit cares not to be tormented before the time, whereas we anticipate the Evils by unquiet Apprehenſions, and wilful Vexations entertain'd in our Minds. The fear of Miſery makes us far more Mi-

ſerable; and the Apprehenſions of an Imaginary Evil, cauſeth us to reſent a real Affliction, and an unfeigned Torment.

When we conſider any Man's Life, we only look upon that which appears moſt delightful and pleaſant. We conſider the Nobility of his Blood, the Variety of his Pleaſures, the Greatneſs of his Riches, the Glory of his Offices and Victories, and the Pomp of his Triumphs. But ſcarce any Man takes notice of his Miſeries and Afflictions; or if ſome be obſerv'd, they are but ſuch as are too obvious to every Man's Eye; as the Publick Affronts and Diſgraces, the loſs of a Battle, the Degradation from an Office, Baniſhments, Impriſonments, and ſuch like unhappy Afflictions. But beſides theſe Calamities which are viſible to all the World, and the common Motives of the condoling Lamentations of our Friends, there are many ſecret Evils that be far more painful. Our neareſt Relations diſcover not always our moſt ſenſible Wounds, to pour into them an healing Balm; they ſeek not into our deepeſt Sorrows, nor do they dream of applying to our Souls the moſt proper Comforts.

When you behold Stage-Players capering upon a Theatre, ſpeaking as big as Kings and Princes, you ſeldom think, that under their Magnificent and Glorious Attire, they hide many filthy Rags, and perhaps ſome incommodious Vermin, that ſtings them to the quick. Thus when you caſt your Eyes upon Riches, Glory, Pomp and the Magnificence of Worldly Men, you do not diſcover and ſee the Canker-Worm that gnaws their Hearts, and the ſecret Fire that devours their Souls. Some there be that laugh in publick before Company, and appear with a merry Countenance, who are full of Deſpair; and in private tear off their Hair, Sigh, and pour forth abundance of Tears. Some feed themſelves before the World with the moſt delicious Meats, and drink

drink the rareſt Wines, but inwardly they are glutted with Poiſon and Gall. This was the Conſideration of the wiſeſt of Kings, when he writ this Sentence; *I have ſaid of laughter, it is mad; and of gladneſs, what profiteth it?* Eccleſ. 2.

As Poverty and a mean Eſtate are never without a train of fretful Sorrows and Cares; likewiſe, Riches and Honour are never without Fears and Diſturbances. And as there is no Flame ever ſo pure, but ſends up a Smoak, nor a Roſe ſo beautiful but has its Prickles; ſo there is no Condition ſo ſplendid nor glorious, nor any Proſperity ſo flouriſhing, but hath its Troubles and ſharp Thorns. Every Man upon Earth (without Exception) bears his Croſs, or hath a grievous Thorn in his Side. The Moth ſticks to the richeſt Stuffs, the Worm gets into the Heart of the faireſt Flowers and Fruits; and the Thunderbolt ſtrikes down the loftieſt Oaks, the higheſt Steeples, and the moſt magnificent Palaces. Likewiſe Care and Grief commonly eat up the Flower of the greateſt Proſperities, and the nobleſt Dignities are often ſubject to the ſtrangeſt Alterations, and to the moſt terrible Downfals. The richeſt Crowns caſt all their Splendor and Glory outwardly, but inwardly they are felt to be weighty upon the Heads of ſuch as bear them. A great Prince found his Diadem ſo burdenſom and unſufferable, that he cried out, *O Crown! if thy Weight were well known, none would lift thee up from the Ground.* 'Tis not without a good Cauſe, that ſuch as are paſſionate for the World, and inclinable to the delights of the Fleſh, are in a continual fear and dread, for they be expoſed to moſt imminent dangers. If their Eyes were open, they would ſee a naked Sword always hanging over their Heads. As in that Statue which *Nebuchadnezzar* ſaw in his Dream, the Head that was of pure Gold, was as eaſily broken as the Earthen Feet, and became as light as the Chaff which the Wind carries away.

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Likewiſe the moſt honourable, the richeſt, and the moſt glorious Eſtate, is as well ſubject to the ſame Miſchances, as the loweſt, the pooreſt, and the moſt wretched. Where are any Riches and Treaſures that are not ſucceeded by Poverty? Where rides that Pride and Pomp that hath not Shame to attend it? Is there any Grandeur in the Age not ſubject to the furious blaſts of Envy? Where is that lighted Taper that a Whirlwind and a Storm of Rain cannot put out? *Chriſtian Souls*, take good notice of the Fruits which the World gives to its Servants and Children, and you ſhall find that they are much like to certain Apples of *America*, of an excellent Beauty, and of a ſweet ſmell, yet they are full of the rankeſt Poiſon, that kills infallibly ſuch as unadviſedly eat of them. There is no ſweetneſs ſo great upon Earth, but hath a mixture of bitter; nor Joy ſo pure and laſting, but is often interrupted with Sighs and Tears. The rareſt Pleaſures have a ſad Countenance and a groaning Aſpect. Our Hearts, in the midſt of Laughter, feel an Oppreſſion, and our Joy is accompanied with Sorrow. Therefore, when the moſt experienced of all former Princes had taken exact notice of all things under the Sun, and taſted all the Delights of Life, he concludes with this Confeſſion, *That all things under the Sun are nothing but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.*

'Tis not needful that I ſhould make here an exact and particular Deſcription of all the ſad and troubleſome Accidents of this Life, that are able to turn the moſt flouriſhing Eſtate up-ſide down. Remember, ingenious Reader, to run over carefully the whole Courſe of thy Life, and examine in the juſt Scales of the Sanctuary, all the good and evil things which thou haſt found by Experience. In one put all the Satisfactions of the Fleſh, and whatſoever brings thee any Advantage or Content; and put in the other all thy fretful Cares, Griefs, Diſpleaſures

pleaſures and Diſgraces. If thine Evils and Miſeries weigh not down the Balance, thou mayſt eſteem it a Wonder and a Miracle. Thou haſt no cauſe to boaſt of thy Earthly Happineſs. Mind well the Speech of *Solon*, one of the wiſe Men of *Greece*, to *Cræſus*, a Prince puft up with his Riches and Proſperity, *That none could be eſteemed Happy before his latter End, and the hour of his Death.* Conſider, that ſome who have attain'd to a greater degree of Happineſs than thou haſt, have fallen into a moſt wretched State on a ſudden. He who lately abounded in Wealth and Plenty, is reduc'd oftimes to the loweſt Poverty. He who had whole Armies at his Command, is ſometimes forſaken of all the World. He who had Princes for his Subjects is often forced to obey a Slave. Some that fed daintily are glad to eat the Bread of Affliction, and to quench their thirſt with Tears. Some who lately flouriſhed in gorgeous Apparel in Palaces, adorned with Gold and Silver, are now rotting in a lothſome Dungeon. Some are dragg'd from their magnificent Dwellings, to the moſt infamous Death. The richeſt and nobleſt Crowns have not protected the wiſeſt Heads.

When it ſhould be poſſible to go through this Life without feeling any Alteration in thine Health, nor ſuffering any loſs of Goods, nor change of thy Happy Condition, which is as rare a thing to be found as a ſtrange Bird call'd a *Phœnix*. Haſt thou no Children, Parents nor Friends whom thou loveſt or oughteſt to love tenderly? Are thoſe Perſons without any Affliction? And is it not poſſible that it ſhould ſeize upon them? Certainly, unleſs thou haſt an Heart as inſenſible as Marble and Steel; unleſs thou haſt renounced all natural Affections, thou muſt needs be moved with thoſe Evils and Diſgraces that happen to them in their Life; and when Death ſnatcheth them away, it muſt needs tear thy very Heart and rend thy Bowels.

But

But if it ſhould happen, (which is impoſſible) that nothing hath ever afflicted thee in thine own Perſon, or in that of thy Friends, and if all ſuch as are related to thee live in perfect and flouriſhing Proſperity, like to thoſe Countries of the other World, that are always covered with Flowers and Fruits; caſt thine Eyes upon the Earth, and thou ſhalt there behold ſo many Evils and Calamities, that if thou haſt any ſenſe of Humanity, thou ſhalt have cauſe to weep. God commanded the Prophet *Jeremiah* to deliver the Cup of his Wrath to ſeveral People, one after another; but now it ſeems that he delivers this Cup to them all at once. For where is that People or Nation that may boaſt of never having drank of it, and of not being in danger of Drinking? Some have drank it up to the very dregs, others drink it by degrees, others have this bitter Cup brought to their Lips.

Our Saviour cauſeth his beloved Diſciple to ſee two Angels, who had each of them in his Hand a ſharp Sickle to reap the Corn, and gather the Grapes, *Revel.* 14. Afterwards he diſcovered to him ſeven more, who had in their Hands Golden Vials, full of the Wrath of God, which they poured upon the Inhabitants of the World, to plague and puniſh them, *Revel.* 15. But at preſent the Holy Angels appear in Troops and Legions to cut off Mankind, and to tranſport them to the Wine-preſs of God's Eternal Vengeance. The Wrath of God ſeems no more to be meaſured out by Vials, nor by Cups, but it overflows as a great River and a bottomleſs Sea that ſwells and runs over the Shore and the Banks. In ſhort, the Deluge of Evils that covers the Face of the Earth, is ſo univerſal, that the Doves, I mean the innocent and meek Souls that love Peace and Reſt, can find no Place to fix and ſettle their Feet.

If

If thou haſt any Chriſtian Zeal and Charity to increaſe thy Senſe of Humility, thou canſt not poſſibly behold with unconcern'd Affections, the deſpicable and dangerous State of Chriſt's Church on Earth. For 'tis like *Noah*'s Ark in the midſt of the roaring Waves, like the burning Buſh of Mount *Oreb*, ſurrounded with Flames, like the Prophet *Daniel* in the Lion's Den, and like his Companions in the fiery Furnace; ſo that it may juſtly ſpeak in the ſame manner as the ancient *Jeruſalem*, *Is it nothing to you, all ye that paſs by? Behold, and ſee, if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the Day of his fierce Anger*, Lam. 1. O bleſſed Church of God, thou haſt felt Perſecution from thine Infancy until now, *Pſal.* 119. Prepare therefore thy ſelf to ſuffer much more in this Decay, and old Age of the World; for the Devil will perſecute thee with ſo much the more Fury and Violence, becauſe he knows that he hath but a ſhort Time, and muſt ſoon be ſhut up in the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone.

In this Caſe, Grief is not only lawful, but commanded: for God requires us to put on Sackcloth and Aſhes, *Iſa.* 22. He deſires that we ſhould be ſick for the Troubles of *Joſeph*, *Amos* 6. That we ſhould weep with them that weep, *Rom.* 12. That we ſhould remember the Priſoners, as if we were Priſoners with them; and that we ſhould ſuffer with them that are tormented, as being Members of one Body, *Heb.* 12. We have good Reaſon to apply to the World, and to the Worldlings *David*'s Saying, *Wo is me that I ſojourn in* Meſech, *that I dwell in the Tents of* Kedar: *My Soul hath long dwelt with them that hate Peace*, *Pſal.* 120. *Jeremiah* had never ſo much Cauſe as we to lament, and to wiſh that his Head were diſſolved into Water, and his Eyes were a Fountain of Tears to weep Day and Night, *Jer.* 9. And the Prophet *Iſaiah* had never ſo much Reaſon to cry out in the Diſpleaſure of his Soul, *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly; labour not to comfort me, becauſe of the Spoiling of the Daughter of my People*, Iſa. 22.

'Tis not therefore without good Cause, that the Preacher acquaints us, *That the Day of Death is far better than the Day of our Birth*; for our Birth causeth us to weep, and Death wipes off all Tears from our Eyes. Our Birth discovers that large Theatre upon which all worldly Tragedies are acted; Death draws the Curtain, puts a period to all such Bloody Scenes. Our Birth casts us into the Fire and Water of divers Afflictions; and Death draws us out of those Flames and Bitterness. Finally, since our Life is but a Chain of Misery, and that Death breaks in pieces the last Link; since our Life is but a continual Fighting, and that Death alone is the Victory; 'tis most certain that this Death is not to be feared as an Evil, and an Enemy, but rather to be desired as a good Friend, and a Blessing. 'Tis reported of the *Thracians*, that they buried their Dead with Expressions of Joy; and the Inhabitants of the fortunate Islands sang and danced at the Funerals of their dearest Friends. I don't commend these foolish Examples of extravagant and barbarous People, who were without Hope and without God in the World. Such cannot fear Death too much; for if it freed them from some present and light Evils, it cast them into an Abyss of excessive Torments. Death is an Happiness, it brings with it a solid Comfort and Joy, but 'tis when we die in God's Favour, and in the Faith of our Lord Jesus. God hath sufficiently declared the Happiness and Pleasure of his Childrens Death; for he often abridges the Days of those whom he favours and esteems. Because he had seen some good Thing in the Person of *Abijah*, the eldest Son of *Jeroboam*, King of *Israel*, he took him away in the Flower of his Age, 1 *Kings* 14. He granted the same Favour to *Josias*, King of *Judah*, one of the most religious Princes of the World, for he had declared to him by *Hulda* the Prophetess, *Behold, I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy Grave in Peace, and thine Eyes shall not see all the Evil which I will bring upon this Place*, 2 Kings 22. 'Tis not to be doubted, but that such

are

are moſt happy as die in the Lord, and reſt from their Labours; but I judge them happy in a two-fold Manner, that die, or rather ceaſe from dying in ſuch miſerable Times, ſo full of Confuſion and Diſorder.

Would you not laugh at a Workman, that ſhould grieve when his Task is ended, and his Labour finiſhed? Or at a wayfaring Man, that ſhould lament to ſee the End of his painful Journey through Prickles and Thorns, and the ſcorching Heat of the Sun, or the unſufferable Cold of the Winter? Or would you not wonder at one that ſhould vex himſelf when he is ſafely arrived in the Haven, eſcaped the Waves of a tempeſtuous Sea, and in a Shelter from the Storms? Wretched Man! thou art far more fooliſh and extravagant than thoſe of whom we ſpeak; for the moſt painful Labours of a Workman, the moſt grievous Wearineſs of a tedious Journey, and the ſwelling Waves of a troubled Sea, are nothing in Compariſon of the Labours, Miſery, and Troubles of this languiſhing Life. You would, doubtleſs, eſteem it a very great Folly and Madneſs in a Priſoner, to be ſorry for being delivered out of his noiſom Dungeon; or in a Galley-ſlave, to be angry when he is to be loos'd from his Chains; or in an Offender, to vex when he is freed from his Torments. What think ye? Is there leſs Madneſs and Extravagancy in you, when ye are grieved to ſee Death, freeing your Souls from this miſerable Body, where 'tis impriſon'd, withdrawing it from the painful Employments of this unhappy Age, more grievous and intollerable than that of the Galley-ſlaves, and diſcharging you from the Troubles of the Soul, far more painful than the moſt inſufferable Tortures of the Body? No, no, Death that thou dreadeſt ſo much, is not the Death of the Faithful, but the End of his Miſeries, and the laſt Period of all his Torments, *Gen.* 8. *Noah*, when he went out of the Ark that ſtop'd upon Mount *Ararat*, had never ſo much Cauſe to praiſe God, and to offer to him the Sacrifice of Thankſgiving, as we have, when he is pleaſed to cauſe us to ſee the End of

the Innundation of so many Evils and Calamities, and to make this floating Life, or this living Death, to stop upon Mount *Sion*.

The Children of *Israel* sang Songs of Thansgiving when they came out of *Egypt*, and saw themselves deliver'd out of a bitter and painful Bondage; where they had been employ'd in gathering of Stubble, and burning Brick. But we have much more Cause to rejoice and to sing Songs of Praise, when Death takes us out of the World, where we suffer a Kind of Bondage, labouring in vain, and enduring the scorching Heat of many Afflictions that consume us. Thou findest fault with some of that inconstant People who murmured to return again into *Egypt*, when they were upon the Borders of the promised Land; but rather find fault with thine own filthy Flesh, if it offers to murmur and revolt, when thou art at the Entrance of thy celestial *Canaan*. *Joseph* rejoiced when the King of *Egypt* sent for him out of Prison, *Gen.* 14. And have we not Cause to be joyful, when God sends for our Souls out of the World, and causeth them to go out of their Bodies, which to them is a Kind of a Dungeon?

If therefore we can speak without impatient Murmuring, I conceive we have as good Reason as *Jonas*, to say, *O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my Life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live*, Jonas 4. Or as the Prophet *Elias*, *It is enough, Lord, take away my Life*, 1 Kings 19. Such a Soul may in a holy Transport, safely speak in the Language of *David*, the Man after God's own Heart, *Bring my Soul out of Prison, that I may praise thy Name. The Righteous shall compass me about, for thou shalt deal bountifully with me*, Psal. 141.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Chriſtian, who comforts himſelf with the Conſideration, that Death delivers us from temporal Evils without Number, which ſo often aſſault us.

O *Glorious Prince of my Salvation! Thou haſt hitherto ſtrengthened me againſt all Fears of Death; but now I heartily beſeech thee to afford me ſuch Grace, that Death may not terrify nor afflict me, but fill me full of Joy and Comfort. Suffer me not to follow the Example of the* Iſraelites, *who forgetting the Hardſhips of their former Bondage, and minding only the Pleaſures and Plenty of* Egypt, *mutiny'd to return back from the Borders of* Canaan. *Let not the Delights of this World, nor the fleſhly Luſts, poſſeſs my Soul; but grant that I may ſo mind the Labours and Miſeries of this preſent State, that as a Workman, contented to ſee Night put an end to his Toil, or as a Traveller either by Sea or Land, willingly enters the Haven or the Inn, where he is to reſt, I may look upon Death in the ſame favourable manner; and the rather becauſe of the terrible Confuſions, the Calamities, Streams of Blood, and Miſchiefs of War, of Fire and Sword, that threaten and devour us. The lamentable State of thy diſtreſſed Church chiefly affects me; 'tis like a ſmall Boat in the midſt of roaring and ſwelling Waves, ready to ſink were it not for thy powerful Protection, who commandeſt the boiſterous Element; or like a* Daniel *in the Lions Den, in danger to be devoured, didſt thou not defend it from the furious Beaſts. I am weary to behold ſo many bloody Tragedies acted, to continue ſo long in a World of Wickedneſs, and to be an Eye-witneſs of the Sufferings, and to hear the Complaints of thy choſen People. O heavenly Father, I am contented to be freed from this Chain of Miſery, from this Life where ſo many Calamities oppreſs and afflict me; Calamities of Sickneſs and Diſtempers, that torment my Body, and of other Afflictions, of which I am ſenſible. When wilt thou releaſe me, O my God, from this Priſon and dark Dungeon, that thy bleſſed Angel may*

convey my Soul to a better State out of the Reach of the Devil's Malice and Power. When thou wilt ſend for me to introduce me into thy celeſtial Jeruſalem, *where I ſhall with the reſt of thy Choſen, glorify thee my God, and forget all my former Sorrows, that ſhall be ſwallowed up in everlaſting Joys, where no Pain nor Grief ſhall ever come near us; but we ſhall be ſecured by thy divine Preſence, from the Senſe and Apprehenſions of all Evil, and be put in Poſſeſſion of an everlaſting Happineſs.* Amen.

CHAP. XXI.

The Ninth Conſolation: Death ſhall deliver us from Sin, which we may ſee reigning in the World, and from the Remains of our Corruption.

WHen God ſent Angels from Heaven to fetch *Lot* out of *Sodom*, and ſecure him from the Flames with which he intended to deſtroy that abominable City, this good Man's Wife could not forbear looking back; but ſhe was in that very Moment ſufficiently puniſhed, by being turn'd into a Pillar of Salt, the Emblem of that Holy Prudence that this Example recommends to Poſterity. That which made this unhappy Woman break the Angel's expreſs Command, was her Affection for the Riches, Plenty, and Pleaſures of that Country, which ſhe had left; not thinking upon the Baſeneſs, Filth, and abominable Vices that brought God's Wrath and Vengeance upon the unworthy Inhabitants. Likewiſe, when God intends to take us out of the World, and to ſecure us from the Senſe of his dreadful Judgments; that which cauſeth us to look back, and hinders us from following the Angels that God ſends to us, to lead us up to the Mountain of our Salvation, is that we think upon nothing but the Riches, Honours, and Pleaſures of this wretched World, inſtead of conſidering the Iniquities that reign here below,

below, wherewith we are defiled, while we continue in this corrupted Fleſh.

Chriſtian Souls, will you prepare your ſelves to go to God? And do you wiſh that Death would comfort and rejoice your Hearts, inſtead of afflicting them? Caſt your Eyes upon thoſe dreadful Vices that are ſo common, under which the whole Creation groans, as under an heavy Burden. O good God, in what Age are we born? An Age like that of *Noah*; for all the Earth hath corrupted its Ways, *Gen.* 6. Nothing but a Deluge of Fire is able to purge it. There was never more Injuſtice, Perfidiouſneſs, Treachery, Debauchery, Inſolence, and Envy; never more Vanity, Luxury, Pride, Cruelty, Blaſphemies, Impiety, and Atheiſm. We may juſtly apply to our Days, that which the Prophet *Hoſea* ſaid of the Corruption of his Time, *There is no Truth, no Mercy, nor Knowledge of God in the Land: There is nothing but Swearing, Lying, Killing, Stealing, and committing Adultery: They break out, and Blood toucheth Blood*, Hoſ. 4. Therefore we have good Cauſe to make *David*'s Prayer, *Help, Lord, for the godly Man ceaſeth, for the Faithful fail from among the Children of Men. They ſpeak Vanity, every one with his Neighbour, with flattering Lips, and with a double Heart do they ſpeak*, Pſal. 12. O wicked World! A World overflowing with Iniquity, a Sink of Impurity, a burning Furnace, heated with the impure Flames of the bottomleſs Pit, and choak'd with the Smoke of Hell. But Sin reigns not only in this wretched World, but it defaces alſo the Church of God, and cauſeth moſt fearful Diſorders among thoſe that bear the glorious Name of *Chriſtians*. They were anciently to be diſcerned from the reſt of the Word, by their Speech, Converſation, and Behaviour; but the Devil hath wonderfully debauched them; he hath blotted out God's Image in their Souls, hath taken from them that noble Diſtinction, and removed far away all Difference between them and the World. We cannot with Juſtice ſay to moſt Chriſtians of our Age, as was ſaid

to the Apostle St. *Peter*, *Thy Speech bewrayeth thee*: Nor appropriate to them, what *Isaac* said to one of his Sons, *Thy Voice is the Voice of* Jacob, *but thou hast the Hands of* Esau; For they have both the Voice and Hands of prophane *Esau*; they speak and live as he did, they publish their Crimes with a brazen Face, and endeavour to glory in their Shame. The Air is infected with their prophane and filthy Language, with their impudent Lying, with their fearful Oaths, and grievous Blasphemies, and the Earth is defiled with their horrid Sins and abominable Crimes: Covetousness, Ambition, Lust, and all manner of Vices have ascended the Throne, they act and command in Chief in every Place: They who have in their Mouths the holy Name of the Lord Jesus, and make Profession of following his sacred Footsteps, give us good Cause to take up again St. *Paul*'s Lamentation and Complaint, *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are Enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose End is Destruction, whose God is their Belly, and whose Glory is in their Shame, who mind earthly Things*, Phil. 3.

If we would seek in these Days for the christian Vertues, where shall we find Faith, Hope, and Charity? Where shall we meet with Righteousness, Fidelity, Holiness, Innocence, Goodness, Meekness, Humility, Patience, Piety, and Devotion? You Daughters of Heaven, what is become of you? We cannot see any more your angelical Countenances. We are so far from beholding the delightful Beams of your divine Presence, that we cannot spy out any of your Footsteps upon Earth. You may thereby understand, Christians, that the Son of God is at Hand; for Iniquity abounds, Charity grows cold, and there is no more Faith upon Earth.

In the Midst of such a woful Corruption, who of us afflicts his Soul as righteous *Lot*? Who weeps Day and Night, as *David*, a Man after God's own Heart? Where can we spy out the Fountains of Tears of the Prophet *Jeremiah*? Or the Confusion of Face of *Daniel*?

Or

Or the Zeal of *Moſes*, of *Phineas*, and of St. *Paul?* If the Angel of God that went through the Midſt of *Jeruſalem*, did take a Review in our Days of the Inhabitants of this Land, I am afraid he would not find many marked with the Letter *Thau*; not any weeping and ſighing for the Abominations that are amongſt us. For Evil and Wickedneſs are become familiar to us, by the means of an univerſal Infection. Our continual Converſation with the Vicious, accuſtoms us to their hainous Crimes, and to their impious Diſcourſes; as we are accuſtomed by degrees to breathe in an unwholeſome Air, without Averſion, and to hear the fearful Downfal of the Cataracts of the River *Nile*, without Repugnancy.

But we are ſo far from grieving at the univerſal Inundation of Vice in the World, that we our ſelves are carried away with the impetuous Torrent of Corruption. Sin gets upon us inſenſibly, and overcomes us; ſo that the World is not unlike to the Houſe mentioned by God in the 14th of *Leviticus*; for it is not only infected with an incommodious Leproſy, but it infects all ſuch as dwell therein. The Men of the World have an eaſier Task to teach us their Vice, than we have to teach and perſuade them to Vertue. As a peſtiferous Body may ſpread the Infection, and give it to a thouſand who are ſound; whereas a thouſand in perfect Health, cannot heal one infected with the Plague. So that as under the ceremonial Law, the clean Veſſel ſanctified not the defiled, but the defiled infected by its Approaches ſuch as were clean: Evil Companies corrupt good Manners, and the Flames of the moſt burning Zeal, are extinguiſh'd by the Coldneſs of the Age. As Lambs cannot feed amongſt Briars and Thorns, without leaving behind them ſome of their Wool: Likewiſe the harmleſs and meek Souls cannot live amongſt ſo much Cozenage and Malice, without loſing ſomething of their Innocence and Chriſtian Simplicity.

Who is it amongst us, that can say with a safe Conscience, that the World is crucified to him, and that he is crucified to the World? *Gal.* 6. Or who is it that lives in the World without being guilty of its Sins, as the Fish drinks of the Sea-Water, and receives nothing of its Bitterness? *Psal.* 26. Who can converse in the Courts of Princes, as *Joseph* in *Egypt*, as *Daniel* in *Babylon*, or as the Queen *Esther* in the Court of *Ahasuerus*? Is there any that can justly say, that he hath washed his Hands in Innocence, and purified his Conscience from all dead Works, to serve the living God? *Heb.* 9. Who can speak in this manner, *I have purified my Heart, I am clean from my Sin*, Prov. 20. in truth? *If we say that we have no Sin, we deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us*, 1 Joh. 1. We have good Reason to break out into the Prophet *Isaiah*'s Exclamation when he saw God sitting upon his Throne, *Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a Man of unclean Lips, and I dwell in the midst of a People of unclean Lips*, Isaiah 6. Or we may say with the same Prophet, *From the Sole of the Foot, unto the Crown of the Head, there is no whole Part.* Not only the Souls that are fixed on the Earth, but also such as mount up to Heaven by fervent Prayers and devout Meditations, have good Cause to acknowledge their Imperfections, and to ask Forgiveness. If any fancies himself to be perfectly whole and free from all Infection, let him look into his Conscience, and seriously examine it, and it will happen to him as to *Moses*, when he put his Hand into his Bosom, he took it out again as white as Snow, all covered with Leprosie, *Exod.* 4. Where is there a Christian that feels no Law commanding in his Members, and struggling against the Law of his Mind? Who is there that finds not by Experience, the Truth of St. *Paul*'s Saying? *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the Things that ye would*, Rom. 7. Gal. 5. Without doubt, such as know not, nor ever have felt the bitter and vehement Strugglings of their carnal Lusts

that

that war againſt the Soul, 2 *Pet.* 1. cannot conceive what it is to deny themſelves, to put off the old Man with his Deeds, to crucifie the Fleſh, with its Affections and filthy Luſts, *Epheſ.* 4. Such know not what it is to mortify our Members, to cut off our right Feet and right Hands, and to pluck out our right Eyes, *Matth.* 10. That is to ſay, to deſtroy, and by an holy Violence, to give a deadly Wound to all our brutiſh Paſſions and vicious Affections, when they ſhould ſeem to us as dear and as uſeful as our Hands or Feet, and as tender as our right Eyes, *Coloſ.* 3. *Matth.* 5.

If theſe curſed Affections could but declare their Names, they would ſay as the evil Spirits of the Goſpel, *Our name is Legion, for we are many.* As that Devil that poſſeſſed the Lunatick, mention'd by St. *Matthew*, caſt him ſometimes into the Fire, at other times into the Water; thus theſe carnal Luſts labour to caſt us, ſometimes into the Flames of Ambition, or into the burning Heat of Covetouſneſs, or to hurry us headlong iuto the Gulf of unlawful Delights, or into the Mud of filthy and carnal Pleaſures. Furthermore, they break the Chains and Ties with which we imagine to ſtop their Fury; they war and fight againſt us by Day and by Night, and at every Moment they return to charge us home, and renew the Combat. Every where they aſſault us, and have no more reſpect for Temples and Houſes of Prayer, than for common and publick Places. As Satan had once the Boldneſs to encounter with *Jehoſua* the High-Prieſt, before the Angel of God; likewiſe theſe curſed Luſts are ſo impudent as to tempt us in the moſt religious Aſſemblies, and the devouteſt Congregations, as well as where we are engaged in the moſt helliſh and debauched Companies of the World.

But theſe Luſts that war againſt the Soul, are as ſubtile and malicious, as they are cruel and obſtinate: When they perceive us upon our Guard, and ſee that there is nothing to be got, they conceal their Weapons and their Fire, but 'tis with a Deſign to ſurprize

and

and burn us when we are leaſt aware. As there are certain Creatures that counterfeit the Dead, that Men might ſpare their labour to kill them: Likewiſe this treacherous Fleſh appears of its own accord as Dead, that we might ſpare it, and not totally deprive it of Life. If then we leave it in Peace and Quiet, it recover its Strength and Vigour, and aſſaults us afreſh with its poiſonous Darts. When we imagine that we have cut up this wretched Plant by the Root, it grows and breaks forth into Bitterneſs. When we think that we have put out this Fire with the tears of our Repentance, it kindles again, and burſts forth into fierce Flames. As ſoon as we have cut this cunning Serpent to pieces with the ſharp Knife of true Repentance, it gets together; and when it ſeems to have loſt all Strength and Heat, it recovers again in our Breaſts, and wounds us to the very Heart. In ſhort, as that evil Spirit mentioned by our Saviour in the Goſpel, when he was driven out of one Houſe, waited for a good Opportunity to return; which as ſoon as he perceived, he took unto himſelf ſeven other Spirits worſe than himſelf, ſo that the laſt Condition of that Man was worſe than the firſt, *Mark* 12. Thus, after an afflicting Faſt and fervent Prayers; after a Torrent of contrite Tears; when we imagine that we have caſt out of our Hearts the moſt dangerous Luſts; if we begin to relent and open to them the Door, they burſt in again upon us with more Fury, and render the Sequel of our Life far more bitter and unpleaſant.

But if you had not ſo many Sins, and your Luſts were not ſo violent, when the old Man ſhould not have ſo much Strength in our Members, and the Temptations ſhould not overcome us ſo often; tell me, I pray, chriſtian Souls, in what Vertue do you excel? Have they all the Beauty, the Glory, and Perfection that God requires? Is your Holineſs without the leaſt Spot or Blemiſh? Is your Innocence as white as Snow, and as bright as the Light? Is your Zeal as hot and burning as that of the *Seraphims*? Is your Charity ſincere,

with

without Paint or Diſguiſe, as that of Chriſt, who gave his Life for you? Do you love God for his Name ſake, or becauſe of his excellent Perfections? Do you love him with all your Heart, with all your Strength, and with all your Thoughts? Do you love him more than you love your ſelves, or any Thing in the World? Do you hate all Things that he hates? And do you carefully abſtain from every Thing that diſpleaſeth him? Do you love your Neighbour in God, and for the ſake of that good God whoſe Image he bears? Do you love him as you love your ſelves, without Hypocriſy or Diſguiſe? Do you never deal otherwiſe with others, than you would have them deal with you? And do you perform to them the ſame good Offices that you would have them perform to you, if they were in the ſame Condition as you are at preſent? Do you ſhine in the Midſt of the dark Night of this Age, as ſo many Tapers lighted with the Beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſs? *Phil.* 2. Do you live as Citizens of Heaven, and as Fellow-Citizens of the Saints, and as the Children of God? *Phil.* 5. Or as ſuch as expect the bleſſed Hope, and appearing of the Glory of the great God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt? Is your Heart in Heaven, where your Treaſure ſhould be, and your Glory and Happineſs? And do you walk as Perſons that aſcend up by the Steps and Degrees of Piety to the heavenly *Jeruſalem?* *Tit.* 2. Do you go from Faith to Faith, from Hope to Hope? And do you make every Day ſome new Progreſs in Holineſs? Do you never grieve the holy Spirit, by whom you have been ſealed for the Day of Redemption? Are you immoveable, abounding always in the Work of the Lord? *Epheſ.* 4. And do you endeavour to be found in him, without ſpot or blemiſh in Peace? 1 *Cor.* 15. 2 *Pet.* 2.

Tell me, devout Souls, whether you be not as the Fire and the Light? For as there is no Flame ſo pure, but hath its Smoak; nor Star ſo bright, but diſappears at the Riſing of the Sun: So there is no Life ſo holy

holy and harmless, but hath its Imperfections, and cannot abide the Sight of an impartial God, and the exact Inquisition of his Justice. When we have well prayed and wept, and beg'd Forgiveness; God hath bestowed upon us a new Heart, and a new Spirit: After all, we have need that he should enlighten us afresh with the gracious Beams of his divine Countenance, that he should lead us by the Hand, direct us by his Wisdom, and accomplish his Virtue by our Infirmities.

Examine seriously, my dear Friends, to what Exercises of Devotion you are most inclin'd, and what secret Motions you feel in your Souls. Who is it that hath the greatest Share in your Heart and Affections? What Thoughts lull you asleep, and what are those that awake you? What do you think upon for the most part? Upon God and his Glory, or upon the World and its Vanities? Upon Heaven and its Excellencies, or upon the Earth and its Riches? Upon Paradise and its immortal Delights, or upon the Flesh and its base Satisfactions? And when you meditate upon divine Things, are you certain that you perform it with a religious Attention, with an inward Delight that ravisheth and comforts your Souls? And when you offer any Prayers to God, do you discharge this Duty with Humility and an holy Zeal? Are your Hearts and Affections carried up to Heaven, before you lift up thitherward your Eyes and Hands? Are your Orizons like the Perfume of the Saints, that came out of golden Viols? Are they like the Incense of the ancient *Israelites*, that smoak'd upon an Altar, burning with a celestial Fire? Do they thus proceed from a Soul purified by Faith, which is more precious than fine Gold? Do they come from an Heart that is enflamed with a Zeal that never dies, and that ascends continually on high? Do you bestow your Alms with that earnest and fervent Charity that God requires of you? Do you open your Bowels to your Brethren, before you open to them your Purse? And do you bestow your Hearts upon the Poor, before you bestow your Money?

And

And for the publick Devotions that you owe to God, pray tell me with what Humility and Reſpect they are performed? Do you call your Delight the Days dedicated to his Glory, and to the Celebration of his holy Myſteries? *Iſa.* 58. Or do you look upon them as troubleſome? Don't they cauſe you to complain in your ſelves, as thoſe prophane Jews ſpoken of by *Malachi*, *Behold what a Wearineſs is it?* Mal. 1. Do you go up to the Houſe of God with the Voice of Melody, and Tranſports of Joy? *Pſal.* 41. Or do you go up thither out of Cuſtom, in a careleſs Manner? When *Jacob* went up to *Bethel* to offer Sacrifices, he buried under Ground all the Gods of Gold and Silver, that were in his Family, *Gen.* 35. Likewiſe, you religious Souls, when you intend to go up to offer your ſpiritual Sacrifices in the true *Bethel*, where God beſtows in ſuch plenty his Bread from Heaven, that gives Life to the World; do you not forget to bury all your Earthly Cares, your carnal Luſts? Or elſe do you nouriſh in your Hearts, all thoſe falſe Gods of whom the World is ſo fond? Do you look upon the Holy Aſſemblies with an unconcerned Eye? Or Do you behold them with Reverence and Reſpect, as the living Images of that glorious Church, gather'd together before God's Majeſtick Throne, which worſhips him Day and Night in his holy Temple? Are thoſe divine *Pſalms* that are there ſung, only upon your Tongues; or do you ſing them with your Hearts to the Lord? Do you think upon the Angels Songs, and the Holy Spirits Hallelujahs, with ſacred Tranſports of Joy? Is the Word of God only an airy Sound, that ſtrikes your Ears, or doth it reach your Conſciences? *Coloſſ.* 3. Doth not your Heart burn within you, while God ſpeaks by the Miniſtry of his Servants, and opens to you his Holy Scriptures? *Revel.* 19. Doth this Heart of yours burn with an heavenly Fire, or with reſtleſs Impatience, to ſee the End of your Devotions, that you might return to your domeſtick Affairs, to your worldly Delights, or to your carnal Paſtimes? *Luke* 14.

Doth

Doth your Soul thirst for God, for the strong and living God? *Psal.* 42. And is the performing of the Holy Will of your Heavenly Father, become your Meat and your only Delight? *John* 4. *Psal.* 103. In short, Do you fly as swift as the blessed Angels, when your great God and Saviour offers to you an Occasion of Advancing his Kingdom, of Comforting his Chosen, and edifying the Souls for whom he died? When *Abraham* offered unto God many Beasts in Sacrifice, a Flight of Birds came and lighted upon his dead Offerings, *Gen.* 15. Thus, when we present unto God the Sacrifices of Praise and Thanksgiving, and intend to multiply the Acts of our Devotion, a great Number of vain and idle Thoughts come to interrupt us. *Abraham* frighted away those troublesome Birds; but 'tis not always in our Power to drive away from our Minds these intruding Thoughts that disturb us in our Devotions. When we will lift up our selves unto God, and draw near to his sacred Throne, our Hearts are far more dull and heavy, than ever *Moses*'s Hands were, so that they fall down again to the Earth, and mind earthly Things. We need therefore that our chief Priest should hold them up: And furthermore 'tis necessary that they should be perfum'd with the sweet Odours of his most holy Sacrifices, *Exod.* 17.

If *David* a Man after God's own Heart, intreats that he would be pleased to sanctifie the Words of his Mouth, and the Meditations of his Heart, *Psal.* 15; if the Prophet *Daniel*, whom the Holy Spirit stiles *A Man greatly beloved*, Dan. 9. who spent the Days and Nights in Devotion, seeks how to make his Prayers acceptable to God: If the Prophet *Isaiah* had need that his Lips should be purified with a burning Coal taken from the Altar, *Isa.* 6. Who will wonder if the Meditations of the devoutest Souls be so often interrupted? If their Prayers be so cold and luke-warm, who can think it strange that we are not able to pray as we ought? *Rom.* 8. And that we have need to desire God's Holy Spirit of Prayer and Supplication, who

prays and interceeds for us, with Sighs, and Groans, which cannot be expreſſed? *Zach.* 13. *Rom.* 8.

That which afflicts moſt the true Believers, is, that when they imagine that they have attained to ſome Kind of Perfection in the Exerciſes of Piety, they find many times to their unſpeakable Sorrow, that they are but Beginners, and that they have made no Progreſs at all. For as the Stone caſt up into the Air, falls down of its own accord, by reaſon of its natural Weight; and as the Water often heated, becomes as often cold and frozen, becauſe Cold is a Property belonging to it: Likewiſe, our Souls, that mount up to God in holy Meditations, and zealous Prayers, fall down again to theſe earthly Vanities, they become cold and heavy; for theſe are their natural Properties. If God refuſed the Sacrifices of ſuch Beaſts as were lame and ſickly; how will he accept of us or our Devotions? If he ſhould treat us with Severity, we, who are faint in his Service, and cannot walk in his Ways without halting and ſtumbling every Moment? For theſe Conſiderations I may apply to the ſpiritual Joy, what was ſaid of the earthly and worldly Mirth, *Joy is cut off by Sadneſs*, Iſa. 65. For when we have felt in our Breaſts this unſpeakable Joy of the holy Ghoſt, and it begins afterwards to abate, it ſeems to us as if it had taken its Flight to Heaven, as the Smoak of *Manoah*'s Sacrifice; then as great a Sorrow ſeizeth upon our Souls; therefore we may complain and cry out as *David*, *Will the Lord caſt me off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his Mercy clear gone for ever? Doth his Promiſe fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in Anger ſhut up his tender Mercies?* Pſal. 75. And pray in the Language of *Iſaiah*, *Lord, awaken thy Jealouſy, and the Stirring of thy Bowels, that are ſhut up to me.* Finally, if after all the Exerciſes of Devotion, if after a ſerious and ſettled Meditation upon God's holy Word; if after Faſting and Mortification, Prayers and Tears, and a conſtant Attendance in the Duties of Religion, we find any good Progreſs

in Piety, we may then also perceive Vice to proceed out of our most glorious Vertues, and perfectest Graces. For as the Moth enters soonest into the richest Stuffs and Cloth; thus Pride creeps into the noblest Souls, and breeds in the most enlightned Understandings. As a primitive Doctor of the christian Church hath very well observed, all Vices are begot by Corruption, and by other Vices; only Pride and Presumption proceed from Vertue. O how hard a Task it is for a Man enabled with Gifts and Perfections that raise him above the Vulgar, not to be puffed up with Pride, nor deceived with a fond Conceit of himself! As the beautiful Bird looks upon and admires the dainty and various Colours of its Wings, thus we behold and admire our selves, we are in Love with our own Beauty, and idolize our Vertues. Therefore, as the Nurse leaves sometimes the Child to its Legs, and suffers it to fall, that it might know its own Strength, and learn to hold faster by the Hand; thus God withdraws from us the Assistance of his Grace to humble us, and to cause us to implore more earnestly the Help and favourable Succours of his holy Spirit. When St. *Peter* felt the sacred Flames of that holy Zeal that was kindled in his Heart, and that sincere Love that he had for Christ; he rejoyced, and imagined himself to be strong enough to resist all the Powers of Hell, and to frustrate all the fiery Darts of the Devil. This good Opinion that he had of himself, and of his own Ability, transports him to that Confidence, as to contradict our Saviour Christ, and to protest, *Altho' all should be offended in thee, yet will not I be offended; and tho' I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* This was he who trembled at the Voice of a Damsel, whose Fall and Apostacy, was as remarkable as his Confidence was great; so that he who thinketh he standeth, should take heed lest he fall, *Rom.* 11.

There is no good natur'd Child, but is vexed to live amongst such as curse and reproach its Parents; and if it should happen to be concerned unawares in the Of-

fence,

fence, or to occasion the Death of him from whom it had its Being, it will feel an eternal Displeasure. Now 'tis certain, that whilst we live in this World, we must spend our time amongst those that blaspheme the holy Name of God, and abuse the Glory of his eternal Godhead. Moreover, Vice and Corruption are so universal, that we our selves offend this Father of Mercies and Compassions; we add Sin to Sin, and compleat the Measure of our Iniquities.

Let us therefore conclude from hence, believing Souls, that Death is not to be feared as an Evil, or a Calamity, but that 'tis rather desirable as an Advantage and a Blessing. For seeing that 'tis to be long'd for, because it frees us from all the Mischiefs and Sufferings of the World; we are the rather to seek it with God's good Leave, because it closeth our Eyes, and conveys out of our Sight, all the Sins and Abominations that abound in the World; and because it stops our Ears, and hinders us from hearing the Impieties and the filthy Discourses that infect the Air. Since Death is to be embrac'd with Joy, because it delivers our Bodies from the Diseases that torment them, and our Minds from the Cares and Displeasures that vex and afflict them; it deserves to be welcomed with greater Expressions of Gladness because it delivers us from all Remains of Sin, and puts a Period to our natural Corruption. So that 'tis to be esteem'd, and look'd upon as the Death and Destruction of the Old Man, rather than the Death of a true Believer.

Sampson rejoyced in his Death, because he knew that in dying, his mortal Enemies should die also, and be destroyed with him. We have more Cause to rejoice at our Death, and to give God Thanks at that time; Since in our dying, or rather in passing from Death to Life, we may see the Destruction of all the dangerous Enemies of our Salvation, who are more dreadful to us than the Philistines were to *Sampson*. All the most cruel and barbarous Men of the World, are not so much to be feared, as the Lusts of our filthy Flesh,

that put out the Eyes of our Underſtandings, that cauſe us to be the Devil's Sport, and to worſhip many falſe Gods.

We commonly run out with Haſte from a Place infected with the Plague, and ſhould not we make as much ſpeed, by our Vows and Prayers, to get out of the World, ſince Vice is ſo infectious and univerſal all over it, that ſo many thouſand Souls are therewith miſerably ſpoiled? Since the World is as a *Babylon*, where all Manner of Debauchery, Vice, and Vertue are mixed together, where Injuſtice and Impiety reign: Have we not greater Cauſe to be tranſported with Joy, when God delivers us from our woful Captivity, than the Children of *Iſrael* had, when it pleaſed him to call them out of *Babylon?* Should they not ſing to him when the Lord turned them back, and reſtored them to *Sion*, who came from their Captivity? We were as thoſe that dream, then our Mouths were full of Laughter, and our Tongue with Songs of Triumph?

In ſhort, as the Lord Jeſus, when he had reſtored *Lazarus* to Life, and taken him out of his Grave, had compaſſion of him, and could not ſee him any longer wrapped up in his Winding-ſheet, and tied with a Napkin; therefore he commanded, *Looſe him, and let him go*: Thus this merciful Lord, who hath made us to be Partakers of the firſt Reſurrection, and called our Souls out of the noiſome Grave of our Luſts, is moved with Compaſſion for us, when he ſees theſe wretched Souls drag about them the Relicks of Sin, and ſome Remains of that Corruption in which they were wrapped. Therefore he will cauſe them to hear this ſweet and comfortable Voice, *Looſe them, and let them go.* Let them go to the eternal Manſions, to the City of the living God, to the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, to the glorious Companies of Angels, and to the Church and Congregation of the Firſt-born, whoſe Names are written in Heaven.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a true Chriſtian, who Comforts himſelf with this Conſideration, That Death ſhall deliver him from Sin that reigns ſo much in the World, and from all Remains of his wretched Corruption.

O *Moſt gracious High Prieſt, Holy, Innocent, ſeparated from Sinners, exalted above all the Heavens, who art now ſhining in Light and Glory, look upon me from thy Sanctuary, and have Compaſſion of my wretched State. Thou underſtandeſt well the Cauſe of my Grief, O Lord, who ſearcheſt the Heart, and readeſt my moſt ſecret Thoughts, that I grieve to ſee ſo much Injuſtice and Impiety reigning this Day in the World; to ſee Vice and Wickedneſs defacing thy holy Church. But that which chiefly increaſeth my Pain, and aggravates my Diſpleaſure, is to find my ſelf guilty and ſpotted with the general Corruption, and my Fleſh warring and ſtruggling againſt the Spirit. The Luſts of the Fleſh not only diſturb me, but they get many times the Victory, and inſult over mine Infirmities. Sin appears to me, not only in all its helliſh Deformity, ſo that I am thereby aſhamed of my ſelf; but I alſo acknowledge, to the Praiſe of thy Grace, that all that is beſt in me, cannot endure an exact Inquiſition of thy Juſtice. Alas, my God! how imperfect is my Piety? How languiſhing is my Devotion? I worſhip thee too much for Cuſtom, and in a very ſlight Manner. I often praiſe thee with my Tongue, and honour thee with my Lips, whilſt my Heart is far from thee. The Love that I bear to thee is not pure and fervent; and my Charity, inſtead of being burning, is quite cold, or luke-warm. I have not a ſufficient Truſt upon thy Promiſes, and upon thy fatherly Care; my Hope is not ſettled, it doth not fill my Soul with heavenly Joys and Comforts. Thine Eyes, O Lord, that ſee all the ſecret Cloſets of my Heart, and pierce into the Depths, are too Holy and Pure, to paſs over the Sight of Evil, and to approve of the ill-favour'd Features of Satan yet imprinted in*

me. Thou discoverest not only my Sins, Iniquities, and all my evil Deeds, but thou also beholdest all the Spots and Imperfections of my best Performances, and of my most glorious Acts. My Lord, and my God, I am not only grieved to see so much Sin in the World, in the Church, and in my Self, but I am also troubled, that I have not Grief enough; that my Soul is not sufficiently vexed, as that of righteous Lot; *that the Zeal of thine House doth not eat me up, as it did the Man after thine own Heart; that mine Eyes are not become a Well-spring of Tears, as those of the Prophet; that I am not heartily concerned for thy Church, as thine holy Apostle; and that I do not sigh and cry, as the Servants whom thou didst mark with the Letter* Thau. *O wonderful Lord! Since 'tis thy Pleasure, wherefore do I not embrace thee by a lively Faith and a sincere Repentance? Wherefore do I not strive by Prayers and Supplications, to obtain from thee thy most precious Blessings, an inward Change of my Self and Spirit, that I may heartily love, fear and adore thee, as thou deservest. O Lord, I find thou hast not forsaken me, but hast commissioned Death to convey me out of this troublesome and sorrowful Abode, to destroy all my mortal Enemies, my Sins and Lusts, and advance me to the Freedom of thy Children. I am not disturb'd at the Approach of so great a Benefactor, that rejoiceth my Heart, and causeth me to embrace and welcome its Arrival, as thy Messenger sent to draw me out of this* Egypt *of Cruelty and Oppression, out of this* Babylon *of Vice and Abomination. I am ready, Lord, when wilt thou free me from these Chains and Fetters of Mortality, to ascend up to my God and Saviour, who is ready to embrace me! Dispatch to me some of thy blessed Angels, who may carry me up to thine holy Mountain, to thine heavenly* Jerusalem, *to thy glorious Paradise, where no Impurity can be admitted, nor Serpent to seduce us, nor Temptations to prevail upon us; where I shall never offend thee, nor grieve thy holy Spirit, whereby I am sealed to the Day of Redemption. O my God! I am weary to hear thy holy Name so often blasphemed, and to see so much Impiety and Wickedness reigning every where in the World. Hasten my*

Departure

Departure hence, and the Accompliſhment of all thy glorious Promiſes of Salvation to thy Church and People; when I ſhall behold thy Face continually, love thee with a perfect Love, and worſhip thee without Diſturbance in the Society of the glorified Spirits, and holy Angels, when I ſhall ſing forth thy Praiſes in Heaven, be cloathed with the white Robes of thine holy Martyrs, and with the Seraphims, attend upon thy magnificent Throne. O my God! Grant that thy holy Zeal kindled in my Soul, may ſerve me as a fiery Chariot, and a ſacred Flame to carry and haſten me up to thy celeſtial Palace, where thou haſt prepared for me an eternal Manſion, and a bleſſed Inheritance. Amen.

CHAP. XXII.

The Tenth Conſolation, is the Glory and Happineſs of our Souls at their Departure out of the Body.

IF there were neither Puniſhment nor Torment after this Life to be feared, the Wicked and Unbelievers who proſper in the World, might juſtly eſteem themſelves the happieſt of all Men. And if there were neither Glory nor Rewards to be expected after Death, the Righteous and the Faithful, who drink, here below, Cups full of Bitterneſs and Sorrow, would be the moſt miſerable of all Creatures. The Condition of the Beaſts would appear more happy than theirs; for they enjoy in Quiet and Peace, all the Pleaſures that their animal Nature is able to reliſh. They are not tormented by ſo many Diſeaſes as vex our Bodies; neither do they know the Cares and Diſpleaſures, that conſume and fret our Minds. They grieve not for the Time paſt, nor trouble themſelves with any Apprehenſions of the Time to come. They never feel the fierce Aſſaults of Luſt: They are ig-

norant of many of thoſe Paſſions, that torment and domineer over our Souls. All their Pains and Sufferings vaniſh with their Breath; ſo that when they are dead, their Sufferings have an End. If we make our Eyes the Judges of theſe Things, we may ſay, *The Accident that happens to Men and Beaſts is the ſame Accident; as is the Death of the one, ſo is the Death of the other.* But if we ſearch and examine farther, we ſhall find more Difference than between Heaven and Earth, between Light and Darkneſs: For, 'tis true, that the Death of Beaſts delivers them from the Senſe of all Evils, but doth not introduce them into any real Happineſs. When it puts an End to their Miſery, it puts a Period to their Being, and to all that Pleaſure and Content, which they formerly enjoy'd; for their Souls and Bodies die together, without any Hopes of living again.

If we look to the Wicked and Unbelievers, we ſhall find that Death deprives them, not only of their Honours, Riches, and of all their Pleaſures and carnal Enjoyments, but puts out their Taper in the blackeſt Darkneſs, and all their greateſt Delights are loſt in a vaſt Sea of Bitterneſs. If Death looſeth them from the Chain of Miſery, unto which all the Children of *Adam* are tied, if it frees their Bodies from the Pain of any temporal Evils, it caſts their Souls into eternal Torments. But for the vertuous and the believing Chriſtians, if Death is ſo great a Friend to them, becauſe it delivers them from many Evils and Miſeries; 'tis a greater Friend, in regard it opens to them, the Gate that leads to an endleſs Glory and Happineſs.

The Son of God had a Deſign to perſuade us this Truth, in that remarkable Parable of the 16th of St. *Luke*'s Goſpel. For at one Hand he ſhews a rich Miſer, cloathed in Purple and fine Linnen, feeding upon Dainties, and living in much Splendour and Magnificence; and at the other he diſcovers to us a poor Wretch, named *Lazarus*, all covered with Sores, lying

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ing at this rich Man's Gate, intreating that he might ſhare with the Dogs in the Crumbs, that fell from the rich Man's Table. The Dogs had compaſſion on him, and licked his Sores. At laſt the poor Man died, and was carried by the Angels into *Abraham*'s Boſom. O wonderful Change! He that was lately a Companion, ſcarce good enough for Dogs, now ſolaces himſelf in the Angels Embraces. He that was lying at the Gate of a proud and unmerciful Wretch, is admitted into the glorious Palace of Immortality, and repoſes himſelf in the Boſom of a charitable and rich *Abraham*, where he is ſatisfied with the Bread of the Living God, and drinks of the Rivers of his Pleaſures. The rich Man died alſo, but whilſt his Body was laid in the Earth with State and Honour, the Devils drag'd his Soul into Hell, and caſt it into a Fire, that burns continually, and that nothing is able to extinguiſh. Therefore our Saviour repreſents this damned Soul, crying, out of Hell Fire, *Father* Abraham, *have pity upon me, and ſend* Lazarus, *that he may dip the Tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue, for I am tormented in theſe Flames.* In the next Verſes our Lord ſhews, how all the Complaints of the Damned are fruitleſs, and their Tortures remedileſs. He makes *Abraham* return an Anſwer to this wretched Son, *My Son, remember, that thou in thy Life-time receiv'ſt thy good Things, and likewiſe* Lazarus *evil Things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

The Heathens have looked upon Death as the End of all their Afflictions and Sufferings; but they have never taſted of the Powers of the Life to come, they have never had any Aſſurance of future Glory and Happineſs. The ſpiritual Joys, and celeſtial Comforts, God keeps for them that fear him and worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth. Theſe precious Riches, and divine Excellencies, are only diſcoverable to the Faithful, chiefly ſince the Time in which Chriſt our Saviour hath brought Life and Immortality to Light, through the Goſpel. Hitherto I have given you a ſhort Survey

of

of the Calamities that attend upon us in this mortal State; I have essayed to present to you all the Comforts, that we may gather from thence, to strengthen a believing Soul, and enable it to withstand and endure all the Encounters with which it is assaulted in this Valley of Tears. At present I intend to describe its future Happiness, when 'tis separated from the Body, and introduc'd into Heaven. I shall as far as I am able, discover to you that Glory and Bliss which our Souls enjoy, in expectation of the great Morn of the Resurrection. You must not think to see here any perfect Image of our celestial Paradise, or any magnificent Draught of the Advantages reserved for us there. It would be as difficult a Task as to paint the Sun in its Splendor, or to measure the Waters of the Sea. I cannot find Words to express my Thoughts, all my Conceptions are far below an Happiness so perfect, and a Glory so sublime. I shall think that I have done enough, if I can but represent to you some few Beams of so great a Light, if I can but shew some Drops of that Ocean of heavenly Pleasures, in which we shall swim for all Eternity.

I shall not deliver any Thing from my own Fancy, nor offer to speak of that which I have never learned from the great Doctor of our Souls. I shall not engage my self in vain Speculations, more fit to please and puff up the curious Wits, than to comfort and rejoice the devout Souls, or satisfie such as hunger and thirst after Righteousness. One Word from the Mouth of the Lord is better, and far more worth than all the Reasonings of humane Wisdom, than all the Subtilties of Philosophy, than all the Arguings and Conclusions of the most refined and eloquent Ages. In this Description, I shall not seek mine own Glory, nor the Applauses of the World, but the Glory of my God, and the Instruction of Souls which he hath purchased with his Blood. I desire to be understood of the weakest Capacities, as well as of the Learned. I hope that such as know the Language of *Canaan*, such

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as have taſted of the good Word of God, and of the Powers of the Life to come, will not miſtake me. For others who have not been accuſtomed to the Reliſh of ſpiritual Things, to whom the Language of God's holy Spirit is inſipid and unſufferable; if they are not moved nor benefited by this Treatiſe, I dare ſay 'tis none of my Fault, but theirs. Therefore as the wiſe Men, when they travell'd to *Bethlehem*, where Jeſus Chriſt was lying in a Manger, took the Star of the Eaſt for their Guide: So we, who are marching to our true *Bethlehem*, where our great God and Saviour is ſitting upon the Throne of his Glory, will follow no other Guidance, but that divine Light which comes down from Heaven. And as 'tis impoſſible to number all the Stars that ſhine in the Heavens; but we are wont to reduce them to certain Figures and Conſtellations: Thus we will not undertake to ſhew you every particular of our private Meditations, upon this rich and divine Subject; but we will diſcourſe to you of the chief Heads, leaving the reſt to your pious Thoughts, and the Information of God's holy Spirit.

Whoſoever thou art that haſt embraced Chriſt, dead and crucified, by Faith and Repentance, and knoweſt thy ſelf united to him, and incorporated into his myſtical Body; remember to praiſe this merciful Lord, and rejoice in his Salvation. Learn to admire the ſuper-excellent Riches of the Treaſures of his Grace, and ſeriouſly conſider how magnificent and liberal he is to thee. For he intends not only to deliver thee from all the Sufferings and Calamities that afflict thee, but he will alſo raiſe thee up to the higheſt and moſt tranſcendent Felicity. He will not only draw thee out of the deep Abyſs of Death and eternal Damnation, but he will take thee up to the Enjoyment of the moſt bleſſed Life, and an immortal Glory. He will not only remove thee from this wretched Wilderneſs, where thou art tormented with Hunger and Thirſt, and expos'd to the ſcorching Heat of a burning

ing Son, to poisonous Bitings of the fiery Serpents, but he will introduce thee into his celestial *Canaan*, where the Milk and Honey of the purest Joys, and most solid Comforts flow in Abundance, and where thou shalt for ever repose thy self, under the refreshing Shadows of the Tree of Life. He will not only deliver thee from the Captivity of this miserable World, which is a true *Babylon*, full of all manner of Abominations, but he will lead thee into his holy *Jerusalem*, and carry thee thither upon his Arms; not with an Intent that thou should'st build and repair it with Cost and Labour, but that thou should'st behold the glorious and magnificent Structures, reared up by himself alone from the Creation of the World, and that thou mayest be eternally satisfied with his overflowing Plenty. He will not only pluck off from thee the filthy Rags of Sin and Corruption, but he will cloath thee with a Garment of Light, of perfect Righteousness and Holiness. He will not only wipe away all Tears from thine Eye, but he will put into thy Mouth Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving. He will not only break the Fetters from thy Feet, but he will place upon thy Head a Crown of pure Gold. He will not only draw thee out of a black and noisome Dungeon, but he will place thee upon a Throne of Glory and Magnificence. He will not only extinguish all the carnal Lusts that war against thee, and put an End to all thy troublesome Combats, but he calls thee to the Fruition of an eternal Peace and celestial Triumph. In short, God will not only separate thee from the Acquaintance of sinful and debauch'd Men, but he will cause thee to enter in amongst the Thousands of Angels, and admit thee to the Vision of his glorious Face.

When a compounded Thing comes to be dissolv'd, every Part returns to its first Principle: Thus, when Man dies, his Body returns to Dust, from whence it is taken, and the Soul returns to God that gave it. As the Bird, when its Cage is broken, flies away into the Air to seek its Liberty and Pleasure. Thus when

this

this Body is broken to pieces by Death, the Soul flies above the Heavens, where it meets with Reſt and Happineſs; or, as 'tis when the Net is torn, the Fiſh falls into the Water, where it lives and enjoys all its Delights: So when Death comes to break the Strings of this wretched Body, the Soul enters into the River of living Water, and into an Ocean of heavenly Delights. Finally, as the Death of our Saviour Chriſt rent in pieces the Veil of the earthly Sanctuary, and diſcover'd all its wonderful Myſteries: Thus the Death of a Believer rends the Veil of this infirm and ſinful Fleſh, and gives us a Sight of the rich Treaſuries and magnificent Excellencies of the heavenly Sanctuary. You Chriſtians; whom God calls to his glorious Reſt, who may expreſs the Greatneſs of your future Happineſs? 'Tis not poſſible to form a right Idea of it. When your whole Lives ſhould have been nothing elſe but a Continuation of Miſery, and a Chain of Calamities; you have now juſt Cauſe to comfort your ſelves, and rejoice in God with unſpeakable Joy. For when all Things are reckon'd up, *the Sufferings of this preſent Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed in us.* You can loſe nothing in this Life, but God will reſtore it to you an hundred times more in his Kingdom; beſides there is no Compariſon between the Advantages of the Life to come, and of this mortal State or Being. Grieve not, believing Souls, to forſake an Earth overſpread with Darkneſs, full of Miſery, and all infected with Sin, ſince thy God purpoſes to receive thee into new Heavens, all enlightned with a divine Light, and enriched with endleſs Felicities, where Righteouſneſs and Holineſs ſit upon the Throne. Grieve not for thy Separation from the moſt pious and regenerated Societies, ſince thou art to be admitted into the Companies of the glorified Saints, and bleſſed Martyrs, who have waſhed and whitened their Garments, in the ſacred Blood of the Lamb; ſince thou art from henceforth to be reckon'd in the Number, and of the

Society

Society of the Angels of Light, and of the glorious Cherubims. Fret not to leave behind thee the holy Congreations of the militant Church; for thou art going apace to the glorious Congregation of the Church triumphing; and in a few Moments thou ſhalt find thy ſelf amongſt the Thouſands of Angels and Saints, that worſhip God Day and Night, and adore him who lives for ever. If God hath beſtowed upon thee worldly Riches, leave them without Regret or Diſpleaſure, for thou art going to poſſeſs ineſtimable Treaſures, which ſhall never be taken from thee. If thou art advanced to worldly Honours, caſt off thy Purple and Scarlet willingly of thine own accord, for God will ſhortly cloath thee with an unconceivable Glory that ſhall never change. When thou ſhould'ſt be raiſed up to the higheſt and moſt ſplendid Dignities, when thou ſhouldeſt enjoy a great and flouriſhing Kingdom, come down from thy Throne with Joy, and let fall thy Scepter and thy Crown; for God calls thee to ſit upon a Throne that can never be ſhaken, to an incorruptible Crown, and to endleſs Triumphs.

Can there be any Town ſo rich, ſo great and noble, that thou mayeſt juſtly grieve to forſake it, at that time when God intends to make thee a Citizen with the glorified Saints of the *Jeruſalem* above; where neither Crying nor Labour, neither Fear nor Grief, neither Poverty nor Want ſhall ever come near thee; Where all the Inhabitants are Kings, and poſſeſs ineſtimable Riches? Is there any Dwelling ſo beautiful and magnificent, that ſhould cauſe thee to depart out of it with Sorrow? For God will lead thee into his own Palace, all built with fine Gold and precious Stones, where he himſelf is the Light, and the Lamb is the Sun. Art thou delighted in the Enjoyment of ſome pleaſant Inheritance here on Earth? Then conſider, that all the Inheritances of the Earth, are nothing in compariſon of that incorruptible Inheritance which God keeps for thee in Heaven, and hath prepared ſince the Creation of the World. Haſt

thou

thou a pleaſant Garden, or a rich Field? But what are all the Gardens of the World, in reſpect of the heavenly Paradiſe, where the Tree of Life grows, that brings forth its Fruits every Month of the Year, and where the River of living Water, as tranſparent as Cryſtal, runs continually?

What Reaſon haſt thou, Chriſtian Soul, to grieve, when thou forſakeſt the Pleaſures of the World, that thou enjoyeſt with the Children of the Earth, or the Delights of the Body, which are common to thee with the brute Beaſts? Since God will ſatisfie thee with his moſt precious Delights; for in the bleſſed Viſion of his Face, thou ſhalt meet with Fulneſs of Joy? Haſt thou any Friends on Earth? Let it not trouble thee to leave them; for inſtead of one Friend here below, whom thou fancieſt to be real and ſincere, thou haſt thouſands in Heaven, who will receive thee into the eternal Manſions, aud embrace thee as their Companion, and the Partaker of the ſame Glory and Happineſs. Haſt thou any Parents or Relations? I ſuppoſe they are not burthenſome to thee, and that thou receiveſt much more Pleaſure and Aſſiſtance from them, than Grief and Ingratitude; yet thou haſt a ſpiritual Parentage in Heaven, and eternal Relations. Thou haſt in the Manſion-Houſe of thy heavenly Father, a great Number of Brothers and Siſters, with whom thou ſhalt live in a bleſſed Unity, as Members of one Body, governed by the ſame Spirit, and enflamed with the ſame Zeal.

Thou, *Husband*, whom Death ſnatcheth away from thy beloved Wife, ſeriouſly conſider, that God will unite thee to himſelf, by an inſeparable Union, and that he purpoſeth to take up to him ſome Part of thy ſelf, that thy Expectation, thy Hopes, and Affections might be now in Heaven. And thou alſo, O Woman! whom Death plucks out of the Embraces of thy dear and loving Husband, remember that thou haſt a Huſband alſo in Heaven, who hath eſpouſed thee to himſelf for ever in Righteouſneſs, in Mercy, and Compaſſion;

paſſion; a Husband always living and glorious; a Husband, who loves thee with an eternal Love, that is ſtronger than Death; whoſe Affections are enflamed for thee in ſuch a manner, that the Water of all the Seas and Rivers are not able to extinguiſh; a Husband who bears with all thine Infirmities, and hath redeemed thee from all thy Sins; a Husband who hath not ſpared for thee his precious Blood, that he might procure for thee the Glory and Happineſs of his Kingdom; who invites thee to his heavenly Nuptials, having prepared and appointed for thee a Room in the banquetting Chamber, where thouſands of glorified Saints ſhall ſit, and where the melodious Harmony of Angels ſhall be heard; a Husband, who calls to thee, reacheth out to thee his Hand, and opens his Boſom to receive thee. If thou haſt found any Satisfaction and Pleaſure in the Company of that Perſon, whom God had given thee for an Aſſiſtant and Mate; judge from thence, what angelical Delights thou ſhalt meet with, in the raviſhing Embraces of thy heavenly Spouſe. The moſt pleaſant Marriage-days are gone as a Shadow, but the Day which ſhall bring thee to thy celeſtial Bridegroom, ſhall never depart, nor darken, and the heavenly Contentments ſhall abide and continue with thee for ever, without the leaſt Diſtaſte.

You beloved, and loving Children, who are yet in the Boſom of a good Father, or of a tender-hearted Mother, ſuffer Death patiently to remove you far from them, and depart with Joy to that good God that will receive you as his Children, ſatisfy your Souls with the Milk of his moſt bleſſed Conſolations, and will make you his Heirs, and Co-heirs with his Son Jeſus Chriſt; Say to him as the holy Prophet, *When my Father and my Mother ſhould forſake me, yet the Lord will receive me*, Iſa. 66. Rom. 8. Pſal. 27. And you Fathers and Mothers, that have a tender Affection for your Children, if Death takes them out of your Sight and deprives you of the Comfort of their

Company,

Company, grieve not as thoſe who have no Hope. For when they ſhould be never ſo accompliſh'd, when they ſhould have never given you but Pleaſure and Divertiſement, what are all theſe pitiful Delights, that paſs away in a Moment, and change oft-times into Bitterneſs and Sorrow, if compar'd with the eternal Pleaſures which we ſhall enjoy, in the Contemplation of God's glorious Face, and in a familiar Acquaintance with his divine Wiſdom? You ſhall not return to them, but they ſhall in their time go to you. So that you ſhall ſhortly ſee one another, in the Dwelling of the Father of Spirits, *Matth.* 27. Death ſeparates you for a while, but the Author of your Life will bring you together for ever.

Finally, of what Age and Condition ſoever you be, if you perceive the Breath of your Life to ſtop, never grieve nor murmur at it. For if Death ſeparates you from your ſelves, it brings you nearer to God, your chief Good; and inſtead of a wretched and periſhing Life, it will promote you to the Fruition of an eternal and ever happy One.

If we had lived in the Days when our Lord was on Earth, there is none of us but would have looked upon it as a ſingular Happineſs and Honour, to have been admitted with *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, when they went up to Mount *Tabor*, to be Eye-witneſſes of our Saviour's Transfiguration. A far greater Honour and Happineſs, Death is endeavouring to procure you; it will uſher you up to Mount *Sion*, it will tranſport you above all the Heavens, where you ſhall behold more excellent Wonders than ever the Apoſtles beheld upon Mount *Tabor*. For you ſhall not only ſee this glorious Saviour whiter than Snow, and brighter than the Sun, but you your ſelves ſhall be transfigured with him, and cloathed with an exceeding great Glory. The holy Apoſtle ſaw but two Prophets; but you ſhall ſee all the Prophets, all the Patriarchs, Apoſtles, Confeſſors, Martyrs, the holy and bleſſed Virgin, and generally all the Saints that reign

and triumph in Heaven. The Apoſtles had a Sight of this Glory of our Saviour, as of a Flaſh of Lightning; it continued with them but a Moment, for ſoon after they came down from that holy Mountain, and were again expos'd to the ſame Temptations as before, and beſieged by the ſame Calamities. It will be otherwiſe with thee, O chriſtian Soul, thou art flying up to Heaven, from whence thou ſhall never deſcend, 'till the great Day of the glorious Reſurrection of our Bodies. Thou ſhalt not be aſſaulted any more by any Temptations. Thou ſhalt have no more Enemies to overcome, nor Bitterneſs to digeſt. Thou art going to reap and enjoy the bleſſed Fruits of thy Saviour's Victories, and to be eternally ſatisfied with the celeſtial Pleaſures that are at the Right-hand of the God of Mercies.

We eſteem St. *John* highly privileged, becauſe the Lord gave him a Sight of his Glory, of the Riches and divine Excellencies of the *New Jeruſalem:* But how much greater is thy Privilege? For that which this holy Apoſtle beheld in a Viſion and a Dream, God will diſcover to thee in Truth and Reality. Let thine Heart liſten, and thou ſhalt hear the Voice of thy Saviour, calling already to thee from Heaven, as unto his beloved Diſciple, *Come and ſee*, come my good and faithful Servant, come my Son, or my Daughter, and I will ſhew thee my glorious and magnificent City, I will ſhew thee the Palace of my Glory, and all the Splendour and State of my Kingdom. Come, and I will expoſe before thine Eyes, all my Riches, Treaſures, and my moſt precious Crowns. Come, and I will cauſe the River of living Water, which iſſues from my Throne, to run before thee, and the eternal Delights that proceed from my Face. I ſhall ſhew thee all theſe heavenly Treaſures and Glory, all the angelical Satisfactions, not in the Viſions of the Night, in an Extaſy, in an holy Raviſhment of the Mind, or in a prophetical Elevation of the Soul; but I will diſcover them to thee in Reality and Truth, by the Aſſiſtance of a purer and more glorious Light than that

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of the Sun. I ſhall not only cauſe thee to behold this Glory, theſe Treaſures and Delights, but I will cauſe thee to be a Partaker of them for ever; for as thou haſt pledged me in the Cup of my Bitterneſs and Sorrows, as thou haſt continued with me in my Afflictions, and haſt been faithful unto Death; I will give thee the Kingdom, as the Father hath given it to me. I will give thee the Crown of Life, and will cauſe thee to ſwim in the vaſt Ocean of the eternal Pleaſures. Thou ſhalt not only ſee all my Treaſures, all my Pomp and Glory; thou ſhalt not only behold the Rivers and the Seas of my moſt wonderful Delights, and ſhalt be a Partaker of them; but thou ſhalt ſee me as I am in my Kingdom. I will pull off the Veil that covers me, and ſcatter the Clouds and Miſts that hide me, ſo that thou ſhalt look upon me without Impediment, and behold me Face to Face. Thou ſhalt be transformed into my Likeneſs, and be ſatisfied with my Reſemblance. You ſee, therefore, *Chriſtians*, that tho' Death appears to us dreadful and ill-favoured, we may apply to it what *David* ſaid of *Ahimaaz*, that 'tis the Meſſenger of good News; notwithſtanding its hideous Veil and Cloak of Darkneſs, we have juſt Cauſe to liken it to the Chariot of Fire, that carried up the Prophet *Elijah* into Heaven.

From what we have ſaid, you may eaſily conclude with the wiſeſt of Kings, *That the Day of our Death is better than the Day of our Birth.* For our Birth makes us Inhabitants of a miſerable Earth, but Death carries us into a Paradiſe of heavenly Delight. Our Birth expoſeth us to ſeveral Encounters, but Death lifts us up upon a Chariot of Triumph. Our Birth forceth from us Crying and Tears, but Death makes us ſing for Joy. Our Birth brings us into the Light, but Death cauſeth us to ſhine as the Sun. Our Birth makes us to live a ſenſual and animal Life, of a ſhort Continuance; but Death introduces us into a ſpiritual and angelical Life, that ſhall continue for ever. In

short, our Birth cast us into the Arms of Death, but Death leads to the Well-spring of Life.

Therefore the Apostle St. *Paul* confesseth, that *Christ is gain to him both in Life and Death*, Phil. 1. And for the same Reason the Primitive Christians could not endure to see any Person afflicting himself for the Decease of Believers, because 'twas the Day of their Deliverance, Rest, Glory and Happiness. They commonly forbad all manner of Mourning; for they judg'd that 'tis not proper that we should cloath our selves with Black, and Sadness, for their sakes who are cloathed in white and shining Garments of Light and Immortality. They look'd upon this Life as upon a continual Death, and upon Death, as upon the Beginning of a real Life. Therefore they stiled the Anniversary Day of the Martyrs Death, *The Day of their Nativity.* From hence proceed the usual Songs of Praise which they commonly sang to perpetuate their blessed Memories.

I need not cause you to take Notice, *devout Souls!* of the notable Difference between the Death of God's Children, and the Death of the Wicked. 'Tis as great as between Heaven and Earth, between Paradise and Hell. *Balaam* had good cause to desire the one, and fear the Consequence of the other. We have as much Reason to cry out as he did, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his*, Numb. 23.

You have heard how an Heathen Prince made this Address to his Soul, *My little Soul, my little Darling,* Adrian. *Hostess and Companion of my Body; thou art going to wander up and down in cold, obscure and fearful Places; thou shalt never delight thy self in Jesting, as thou hast been wont; thou shalt never give me any more Pastime.* But when a Christian Soul goeth out of this mortal Tabernacle, he may talk to it in another Manner: O my Soul! pleasant Hostess, and heavenly Companion of this weak Body, thou canst not wander

out of thy Way, for thou haſt a faithful and a knowing Guide. Thou art already in the bleſſed Company of Angels, that ſhall bear thee upon their Wings; thou art going to a noble Palace, enriched with Light and Glory, and bleſſed with the ſincereſt and moſt heavenly Delights. Thou ſhalt meet with no more Sorrows, Grief, nor Diſpleaſure, which ſo often diſturb thy Quiet here upon Earth; Thou ſhalt rejoice for ever with all the glorified Saints, and ſing Songs of Praiſe and Thankſgiving with all the celeſtial Spirits. O my Soul! How great is that Glory and Happineſs which thou mayeſt juſtly expect from thy God, who hath both an infinite Power, and an infinite Mercy and Goodneſs, ſince he hath endeared thee unto himſelf, by giving his own Life to free thee from Death and eternal Damnation! If your Friends, or rather your Enemies, in this Occaſion, weep and are grieved at your Departure: If they labour by their Tears and Sighs, to move your Heart, and to perſuade you to remain yet here below; ſpeak to them, as St. *Paul* did to thoſe that wept about his Neck, *What mean ye to weep and to break my Heart?* Acts 21. St. *Paal* was then in his Journey to *Jeruſalem*, where he was to be bound, impriſon'd, and to be carried to the City of *Rome*, where he was to die upon a Scaffold by the Separation of his Head from his Body; notwithſtanding St. *Paul*'s Friends comforted themſelves with this Expreſſion, *The Will of the Lord be done.* And what mean ye, my Friends! Will ye ſtop me from going up to an heavenly *Jeruſalem*, at the Gates whereof I muſt caſt off all theſe Chains and Fetters of Mortality? I muſt leave my Sins and all my Sufferings and Grief? I ſhall enter into a new Glory, into the ever-bleſſed Company of Saints and Angels. If your Love be ſincere and real, prefer my Felicity and Reſt, to the ſmall Satisfaction that you find in my Company here below. Conſider, that in the Houſe of my God, and in the Viſion of his glorious Face, I ſhall find every Moment more Joy and Pleaſure, than I

should have met with upon Earth in thousands of Ages. All the Pomp and Splendour of the World, all the Glory and State, its Riches and Treasures, its Pleasures and Delights, are mean and contemptible to those that I am going to enjoy in Heaven, as a few Drops of Water to a boundless Sea, or as a Flash of Lightning to the Noon-Sun. Must the blind Passion which you have to enjoy me, hinder me from seeing the Face of my God and heavenly Father? Suppose I were now shut up with you in some dark Dungeon, and bound with the same Chain; would you rather see me your Companion, to continue in your Misery and Sufferings, or, to behold me at a distance at Liberty, in the Fruition of a perfect Satisfaction? Pretend not, that we shall never see one another any more: For can you be so great an Unbeliever to doubt of God's Mercy, that intends to bring us together again in Heaven? Death separates us for a Moment, but the Prince of Life will unite us together for ever in his Father's House, whither he is gone to prepare a Place for us. O devout and religious Soul! By such Language as this thou shalt be able to mollify the hardest Hearts, and prepare them to behold thy Translation into Heaven, as *Elisha*, when he saw his Master's Rapture. If they feel any Displeasure and Grief for thy Separation from them; they will have more Joy and Comfort to consider with the Eye of Faith, that extraordinary Glory and Happiness into which God intends to receive thee, through his infinite Goodness and Mercy.

If it happens otherwise, and that thou art to deal with weak Minds, whose Love is blind, and whose Passions are so unreasonable, as to resist God's Appointment, and hinder thy Promotion to Happiness; thou must overcome, by the Strength of God's Grace, and the Assistance of his holy Spirit, all the furious Reluctances of Nature. Thou must imitate St. *Peter*, when he saw our Saviour Christ in his Transfiguration upon Mount *Tabor*; he forgot his Family, and all his dearest

deareſt Enjoyments in the World, therefore in that Exceſs of Joy, he cried out, *Lord, it is good for us to be here.* In the ſame Language muſt you ſpeak, *chriſtian Souls*, I dare be bold to affirm, if your Mind is raiſed up by Faith into Heaven, to behold Jeſus Chriſt ſhining in Light and Glory, and ſurrounded by all the holy Angels and immortal Spirits; Aſſoon as you ſhall have but the leaſt Reliſh of Paradiſe, you will be ſo raviſh'd with that extraordinary Happineſs, that you will eaſily forget the moſt lovely Enjoyments of the Earth, unto which you had devoted your Affections. So that in that Tranſport of Joy, you will be ready to burſt out in this Language, My Lord, and my God, I am ſick with Love for thee, I wiſh for nothing but for thy glorious Preſence; my chief Happineſs is to be with thee, and to behold thy Face, where I ſee already ſo much Light and Love. I confeſs we ſhall not ſay as St. *Peter*, *Let us build Tabernacles*; for we ſhall never be concerned as Soldiers, and Travellers in Fights and Journeys. We ſhall not ſay, Let us build an Houſe, that we may dwell with thee and thy bleſſed Company; for I ſee, O God, with the Eye of Faith, the Palace which thou haſt built from the Foundation of the World, where thou haſt prepared a Place for me. Lord, open to me the Gates of this glorious Palace, that I may enter in, and ſing forth thy divine Praiſes.

My dear Friend, ſhall the miſerable *Pagans*, who never taſted of the heavenly Gift, who were never made Partakers of the Spirit of Grace, nor of the Powers of the Life to come; the Heathens who were without Hope, and without God in the World; ſhall they march couragiouſly to meet Death, and wilt thou that haſt had ſome Fore-taſts of the Happineſs of Heaven, and haſt ſeen ſome Beams of its Glory, canſt not thou reſolve to depart out of the World? Shall a *Seneca*, who had no other Means to ſtrengthen himſelf, but the Perſwaſion of his vain Philoſophy; who had no Expectation of Advantage of the Life to

come; ſhall ſuch an one look with a ſtedfaſt Countenance upon his Blood and Life, guſhing apace out of his Veins? Aud thou, my Brother, haſt thou been brought up under the Tuition of an eternal Wiſdom? Doſt thou embrace, by Faith, the Glory and Felicities prepared for thee by God, and art not able to look upon Death, with Reſolution and Courage? And canſt not leave the World with Expreſſions of Joy? Shall *Socrates*, whoſe infirm Body was animated by a ſinful Soul, and who had no manner of Antidotes againſt Death, drink up that Poiſon that was mixed for him, as a pleaſant Potion? And thou, Chriſtian, who art animated by the Spirit of the living God, that ſeals to thee his great and moſt precious Promiſes; thou Chriſtian, who enjoyeſt the Earneſt of that Inheritance prepared for thee in Heaven; ſhalt not thou be able to ſwallow down, with content, the Cup that Death holds out to thee? Thou haſt a powerful and an infallible Antidote againſt this Poiſon; for after this bitter Cup, thou art going where thou ſhalt drink at Leiſure, out of the Rivers of eternal Pleaſures. Shall it be ſaid, that in the Jews Houſes, at the Time of Death, the Sound of Inſtrument of Muſick was heard, together with Crying and Lamentations; and at thy Dwelling, who haſt an Intereſt in Chriſt crucified, and ſeeſt him reigning and triumphing in Heaven; there ſhall be nothing heard but Weeping and Sighing, and no Praiſing God, nor Giving of Thanks?

Finally, in regard ſo many Perſons of all Ages, Sexes, and Conditions, have deſired Death, to be free from all earthly Evils and Calamities; haſt not thou greater Reaſon to wiſh for it heartily, when it ſhall pleaſe God that thou mayeſt enter into the Fruition of the Advantages and Happineſs of the heavenly Life? How excellent is thy Loving-kindneſs, O God! Therefore the Children of Men, or rather thy Children, the Brothers and Siſters of Jeſus Chriſt, thy Well-beloved Son, put their Truſt under the Shadow of thy Wings; thy ſhall be fully ſatisfied with the

Fatneſs

Fatneſs of thy Houſe, and thou ſhalt cauſe them to drink out of the Rivers of thy Pleaſures.

If you be paſſionately deſirous to taſte of the angelical Delights, and reliſh the divine Pleaſures, that flow from the Throne of God and of the Lamb; if you be really a thirſt for God, will not you ſpeak in *David*'s Language? *Pſal.* 42. *As the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee, O God; my Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God, when ſhall I come and appear before God?* Pſal. 63. And elſewhere, *O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee, my Soul thirſteth for thee, my Fleſh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirſty Land, where no water is, to ſee thy Power and Glory, ſo as I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary.* 'Tis not poſſible to taſte of the heavenly Joys, but we are conſtrained to cry out as the Man after God's own Heart; *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts! My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord, my Heart and my Fleſh crieth out for the living God,* Pſal. 84.

Conſider well, believing Soul, what vaſt Difference there was between the earthly *Jeruſalem*, for which *David* was ſo paſſionate, and the heavenly *Jeruſalem* where God intends to receive thee. What great Diſproportion was there between the little Stream of *Shilo*, and the large River of Paradiſe; between the material Tabernacle, the Mercy-ſeat cover'd over with fine Gold, upon which the *Cherubims* ſtretched out their Wings; and the immaterial Sanctuary of Heaven, of *Jeſus Chriſt* the true Ark of the Covenant, in whom are hid the richeſt Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, in whom the Fulneſs of the God-head dwells bodily, and in whoſe glorious Preſence the *Seraphims* cover their Faces with their Wings, *Coloſſ.* 2. How contemptible were the Sacrifices, Oblations and Burnt-Offerings of the Children of *Iſrael*, in Compariſon of the ſpiritual Sacrifices that are preſented to God in Heaven, in Compariſon of the Offerings burning there entire in the Flames of

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an holy Zeal, and of a perfect Charity? And what was all the Frankincenſe of *Arabia*, and the ſweet Smells of the *holy Land* which were conſumed in God's Preſence, if compared with the ſacred Perfumes that mount up out of the golden Vials that are in the Hands of all the Members of the glorified Church! Since *David* eſteems a Door-keeper of the Houſe of the Lord, an happy Man on Earth, how great ſhall thy Glory be, and extraordinary thy Happineſs, O believing Chriſtian? For thou art going to be advanced to the moſt honourable Room of that celeſtial Dwelling, which God hath built with his own Hands. To this Purpoſe, our Lord Jeſus hath made thee this gracious Promiſe; *Him that overcometh, will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out, and I will write upon him the Name of my God, and the Name of the City of my God, which is new Jeruſalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new Name*, Revel. 3. If this great King was ſo deſirous to hear the *Levites* ſinging the Praiſes of God, with their Tongues, and Inſtruments of Muſick, how much more paſſionate ſhould we be to hear the Harmonies of Heaven, and the celeſtial Hymns of the holy Angels, Arch-angels, Cherubims, Seraphims, and of all the glorified Saints, who have in their Mouths every one a new Song, the Song of *Moſes*, and of the Lamb?

When the Shepherds heard ſome few Expreſſions of the Angels Songs, who praiſed God at the Nativity of the Son of God, they began to rejoice with an exceeding great Joy, they left their Flocks, and ran in haſte to look upon the Child *Jeſus* in the Manger of *Bethlehem*. And thou, devout Soul, thou heareſt already the ſweet Anthems of Paradiſe, and the raviſhing Conſorts of thouſands of Angels; thou knoweſt that thy Saviour ſits there upon a Throne cloathed with Glory and divine Majeſty, and wilt thou not forſake all the baſe Employments of this ſenſual and animal Life, to go and ſee this wonderful Saviour, who expects

pects thee, and intends that thou ſhalt ſit alſo with him upon his Throne.

Zacheus climbed upon a Sycamore-tree with an earneſt Deſire to behold the Lord *Jeſus* as he paſſed by, when he was in a State of Humiliation and Abaſement: Shouldeſt not thou be as earneſt, O chriſtian Soul, to fly up above the Heavens, to ſee this merciful Saviour in the State of his Glory and Elevation, and to have him always in thine Eye for ever and ever? When our Lord was come into the Houſe of this poor Publican, he told him, that Salvation was that Day come to his Houſe; and ſhalt not thou, O bleſſed Soul, have more Reaſon to ſay when thou ſhalt enter into the Palace of this glorified Redeemer, I am this Day entring into my Salvation and my Glory?

We highly eſteem *Jacob*'s Happineſs, when he was in *Bethel*, becauſe God appear'd to him in that admirable Viſion, mentioned in the 28th of *Geneſis*; but if thou art an *Iſraelite* without Fraud, I eſteem thee to be in a more happy and a more bleſſed State. Thou haſt more Reaſon to break out into *Jacob*'s Language, *This is God's Houſe, and the Gate of Heaven.* *Jacob* ſaw the Heavens open, but he was not admitted into them at that Time; but now God opens theſe Heavens to receive and lodge thee for ever. The holy Angels of God went up and down the Ladder, that reached up from the Earth to Heaven, but they left *Jacob* at the Bottom of this Ladder; whereas the Angels, that are about thee, are come down to cauſe thee to aſcend up with them, or rather to carry thee up in their Hands, and bring thee to Chriſt, typified by this myſterious Ladder. *Jacob* ſaw God at the Top of this Ladder, but he was to go afterwards to *Padan Aram*; he was to travel up and down, to ſuffer many Inconveniencies, the Heat of the Day, the Froſt of the Night, the Diſpleaſure of his Father-in-Law, and his Treachery, he was to fly from the Cruelty of his Brother *Eſau*; nay, more than that, he was forced to ſtruggle and wreſtle with God himſelf. Whereas here is now the End of thy Pilgrimage,

mage, of all thy Troubles, and Encounters. Thou ſhalt never feel the burning and ſcorching heat of thy Afflictions. Thou ſhalt be no more tortured with the Fears and Apprehenſions that now congeal thy Blood; thou ſhalt no more ſtand upon thy Guard for fear of Deceits, and violent Dealings of Men. Thou ſhalt wreſtle no more with God by Prayers, Supplications, and Tears, for they ſhall be no more in uſe. God ſhall load thee with his moſt extraordinary Bleſſings, and beſtow himſelf upon thee.

The Prophet *Moſes* wiſhed very paſſionately to ſee, but for a Moment, God's Face, whereof he had beheld ſo many glorious Expreſſions, and ſhouldſt not thou deſire as paſſionately to ſee that beautiful and everſhining Countenance in its Glory and Splendor? O religious Soul, who art enflamed with this divine Affection, God will ſhortly gratify thy Deſires. So that thou may'ſt ſay to him as one of the Prophets, *Thou ſhalt cauſe me to know the Way of Life: Thy Face is the Fulneſs of Joy, and at thy right Hand are Pleaſures for evermore.*

Chriſtian, if thou hadſt but as much Faith and Aſſurance, as there is Glory and Happineſs in Heaven, with what Exceſs of Joy wouldſt thou leave the World and all its Vanities, to aſcend up to that magnificent Palace, purchaſed for thee with the precious Blood of thy Redeemer?

Jonathan's Eyes were once enlightned, when he taſted ſome Honey with the End of his Rod, which he had found in a Rock; and thou, Believer, if thou haſt by Faith taſted the divine Sweetneſs that proceeds from Chriſt, the Rock of Eternity, thine Underſtanding will be all enlightned. Thou ſhalt need no other Conſolation againſt Death, for Death it ſelf ſhall fill thee full of Conſolation and real Joy; ſo that thou ſhalt have cauſe to ſpeak, not only as *Jacob*, *O God, I expect thy Salvation*, Gen. 49. but as King *David*, *I was glad when they ſaid unto me, let us go up into the Houſe of the Lord, our Feet ſhall ſtand within thy Gates, O Jeruſalem,*

Pſal.

Pſal. 122. By this means thou ſhalt not only expect with Patience, and embrace with Joy, the bleſſed News of this glorious Salvation, but thou ſhalt endeavour to haſten its Coming by thy continual and repeated Sighs. O my God, when wilt thou ſtretch out to me from above thy gracious Arms? When ſhall I ſee plainly thy divine and glorious Face? When wilt thou cauſe me to drink out of the Rivers of Pleaſures? How Bleſſed is the Man whom thou haſt choſen and taken to thy ſelf, to dwell for ever in thy Courts? Such ſhall be ſatisfied with the good Things of thy Houſe, and of thy glorious Palace.

Joſeph marched out of his Priſon in Haſte, to go to the Palace of the King of *Egypt*; and haſt not thou as much Reaſon to make as much Haſte out of the Priſon of this wretched Body, O believing Soul, that thou may'ſt aſcend up to the Palace of the King of Kings, who intends to inſtall thee into ſuch a glorious State, in compariſon of which, all the Pomp of *Pharoah*, and of all the Kings, and Princes of the Earth, is nothing but as the Hoar-froſt of the Night.

Bartimeus forſakes willingly his Mantle to creep to the Lord *Jeſus*, when he called him; and thou Chriſtian Soul, wilt not thou leave this Body, which is as a troubleſome Garment to thee, to aſcend up to this Divine Saviour, who intends to cure thee of all thy Diſtempers and Diſeaſes, and who purpoſes to load thee with his Bleſſings and unſpeakable Favours? He will not only bring thee to behold the refreſhing Light of Heaven, but he will alſo cauſe thee to ſhine as the Sun, for ever and ever.

Religious Soul, caſt off this ſpotted Garment of the Fleſh, and ſo much the more chearfully, becauſe God holds out in his Hand a Garment of Light and Glory, which he will beſtow upon thee. For it ſhall happen to thee as to the Prophet *Elijah*, who having let fall his Mantle, he found himſelf all encompaſs'd about with Flames of Fire, and an extraordinary Light.

Light. As ſoon as thou ſhalt caſt off this miſerable Body, thou ſhalt be ſurrounded with celeſtial Flames, in which thou ſhalt mount up to Heaven into the Dwelling of Immortality, where thou ſhalt be like God, who cloaths himſelf with Light as with a Garment. To this purpoſe the Words of the prophet *Zachariah*, concerning the High-Prieſt *Joſhua*, are very proper; he was arrayed with filthy Garments, but an Angel from Heaven calls to them that waited before him; *Take away the filthy Garments from him, and cloath him with Change of Raiment, let them ſet a fair Mitre upon his Head:* This, O chriſtian Soul, is the true Image of thy Condition, at thy Departure, and the lively Portraiture of thy future Happineſs. At preſent thou art clothed with a Body undermined by Sickneſs and Labour, thou beareſt about thee the Relicks of the old Man; but behold, God calls to thee from his holy Sanctuary, Take away from him this old Garment, pluck off all Remains of this old Cloathing beſpotted with Sin, where the Devil's Image is yet to be ſeen, and give him the ſacred Ornaments of a royal Prieſthood; cloath this Soul with a long Garment whitened in the Blood of the Lamb, gird it about with the Ephod of Righteouſneſs, put upon its Head an incorruptible Crown, and in his Hand a golden Vial, that it may for ever offer up the heavenly Perfumes in Company of all the glorified Saints.

If after all this, O Chriſtian! Thou doubteſt of the Felicity and Glory of ſuch as die in the Lord *Jeſus*, hear what an Apoſtle ſaith, who was himſelf raviſhed up into the third Heaven, where he beheld in this glorious Palace unſpeakable Things; *We know, that if our earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a Building of God, a Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens. For in this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloathed upon with our Houſe which is from Heaven. If ſo be that being cloathed we ſhall not be found naked; for we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be uncloathed but cloathed upon,*

upon, that Mortality might be ſwallowed up of Life. And liſten to what the holy Ghoſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, for ſo ſaith the Spirit, for they reſt from their Labours, and their Works follow them.*

Would to God that we had ſome other Word beſides that of *Death*, to expreſs the wonderful and happy Change that we make when we go out of this miſerable World. For to ſpeak properly, we cannot be ſaid *to die*, when we leave a Place full of Miſery, to enter into another bleſſed with an endleſs Felicity; when we exchange a laborious State for a peaceable and happy Reſt; when we come off from a cruel War, to enjoy the Pleaſures of everlaſting Joys; when we paſs through Death to an endleſs Life; and forſake a Tomb to mount up upon a Throne. Chriſtian Soul, remember thy Beginning and thine End, conſider what thou art, from whence thou proceedeſt, and whither thou goeſt. Thou art a living Image of thy Creator, and a Beam of Glory; thou art of a celeſtial and immortal Nature. God hath waſhed and cleanſed thee in the Blood of his Lamb, without Spot or Blemiſh, and ſanctified thee by his holy Spirit. He hath brought thee to a Diſpoſition fit to enter into his holy City, and he is ready to admit thee to the Fruition of his Glory; thou haſt *fought the good Fight, finiſhed thy Courſe, and kept the Faith*, 'tis therefore high time that thou ſhouldeſt receive the Crown of Life. Thou haſt this precious Crown already in thy Hands. Thou art at the Gates of Heaven, at the Entrance of Paradiſe.

O therefore, O believing Soul! Go with Joy and Gladneſs to this great God that calls thee, to this merciful Saviour that ſtretcheth forth his Hands unto thee, and opens his Boſom to receive thee. Go into the glorious Company of Angels and bleſſed Spirits. Take upon thee theſe beautiful Robes of Light, with which thine heavenly Father will cloath thy Nakedneſs, and accept this immortal Crown that he offers to thee. Go, and ſatisfie thy ſelf with the Bread of the

Kingdom

Kingdom of Heaven, and remove thy Thirſt with the chryſtal Waters of that *River of Pleaſure, which proceeds from the Throne of God and of the Lamb.* Go and behold the Face of the Father of Lights, be happy with his divine Reſemblance; and be transform'd into his glorious Image.

O bleſſed Soul! Seeſt thou not already the Heavens open, and *Jeſus Chriſt* at the right Hand of God the Father, holding out his Hand to thee, offering to receive thee into his glorious Reſt? Seeſt thou not the Angels of Heaven (cloathed in white Raiment) coming to tranſport thee out of this miſerable State? Seeſt thou not how thou art already encompaſſed about with light and celeſtial Flames? Doſt thou not reliſh the Sweetneſs of Paradiſe? Is not there a Heaven already in thine Heart? Heareſt thou not the Hymns of the glorified Spirits? Hath not the Lord cauſed thee to underſtand that ſweet and comfortable Voice ſounding in thine Ear, *Verily, I ſay unto thee, thou ſhalt be this Day with me in Paradiſe; Come, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord?* Feeleſt thou not thy ſelf lifted up above all earthly and periſhing Things? Doſt thou not fly upon the Wings of Faith and Repentance to the Throne of God's Glory? Doſt thou not caſt thy ſelf into Paradiſe, into the Arms of almighty God, into the Boſom of the Lord *Jeſus*, to reſt there for ever; and to be ſatisfy'd with the good Things which *Eye hath not ſeen, Ear hath not heard*, and which are not *entred into the Heart of Man*, but which *God hath prepared for them that love him?*

A Prayer and Meditation of a Chriſtian Soul, which prepares to depart out of its Body, and comforts it ſelf in the Contemplation of the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe.

O *God! the Author of my Being, and the Sovereign Lord of my Life, thou ſeeſt all the Motions and Diſpoſitions of my Soul, thou knoweſt that I have wholly reſigned my ſelf into thy Hands, and deſire nothing elſe but to depend upon thy good Pleaſure; ſpeak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth; here I am to do thy Will, O God. As the* Iſraelites *waited for thy Motion and Order to remove their Camp; ſo I am as ready at thy Command to leave this earthly Tabernacle. And as the golden Cherubims were always upon their Feet, their Wings ſtretched out, and their Faces towards the Mercy-Seat; in like manner, I deſire to be in a Poſture to take my Flight up to thy Mercy Seat, to my Lord Jeſus, the Propitiation for my Sins, aſſoon as thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thine Hand unto me, to take me out of this troubled Sea, and out of this dark Night of Affliction. I am as willing to go to thee, bleſſed Saviour, and to leave my ragged Garments behind, as blind* Bartimeus; *or as* Elijah, *to caſt off this Mantle of the Fleſh, that I may aſcend unto thee in a bright Chariot of Fire. I am not grieved to quit this earthly Tabernacle, for thou haſt prepared for me a more laſting Dwelling in Heaven. Let my Body return to the Duſt from whence it proceeds, ſo that mine immortal Being, a Beam of thy Glory, may be admitted into thy Favour, Mercy, and Preſence, unto which it deſires to return. I doubt not of thy gracious Reception of it, ſince thou haſt promiſed to give the Crown of Life to all ſuch as perſevere in thy Faith and Fear, and the Rewards of Immortality, to ſuch as fight under thy Banner, and overcome Satan, Sin, and the World. By thy Grace and Power, I have vanquiſh'd theſe Enemies of my Salvation, and have no other to contend with but Death. O ſtrengthen me with thy Holy Spirit, that I may conquer this*

last Enemy; that I may find by it a Passage to thine eternal Glory and Happiness. I trust upon thy fatherly Goodness and unchangeable Affection, upon that intimate Relation with which I am honour'd, and am confident thou wilt not forsake me in my urgent Necessity and Agony. Send to me thy good Angels, that they may carry me upon their Wings, and introduce me into thy heavenly Kingdom, and see thy Salvation compleat. I long to be with thee in thy celestial Jerusalem, and enter into thine holy Sanctuary, into the Society of the glorified Saints, and immortal Spirits, that minister before thy Throne. I am sensible of thy Saving-Grace bestowed upon me, and mine Affections are already separated from the World; at present all my Thoughts and Expectations are with thee, my good God. Receive me into thy magnificent Palace, that I may see thy Face in Glory, and embrace my blessed Redeemer. And before I go hence, speak to my Soul in a Language answerable to its vehement Longings, and let me hear this comfortable Saying, This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise. I am already sensible of that Joy, that expects me in thy Presence, where it shall be full and compleat, of that Peace and Happiness, into which I am going apace. I have already the Fore-taste of the heavenly Pleasures which must needs exceed all that we can say or think. I see the Heavens open, and my Lord Jesus ready to receive me. Into thy Hands I commit my Spirit, for thou hast redeemed it. Amen.

CHAP. XXIII.

The Eleventh Consolation. The glorious Resurrection of our Bodies.

WHen God created Angels, he gave them a spiritual, and altogether celestial Nature, that had no Affinity with Matter. I confess, that some of these heavenly Spirits have often appear'd in human

Bodies

Bodies to the ancient Patriarchs. But those Bodies were extraordinary and miraculous, formed by the Power of Almighty God for such Occasions. Besides those holy Spirits were not in those Bodies as the Soul is in ours, quickning and animating them in the same manner, but only as the Pilot is in the Ship that he governs. Therefore, as soon as they had fulfilled the Work about which they were employed by God, they left those Bodies without Prejudice to their Beings, as the Pilot leaves and goes out of the Ship when he hath brought it to the desired Haven. All the Happiness of these glorified Spirits consists in this, that God hath confirm'd them in his Grace and Love, and admitted them for ever to a continual Contemplation of his glorious Face. 'Tis not so with our Souls, for altho' they be also spiritual and of an heavenly Substance, God hath not created them to be alone, and to subsist at a Distance from all Matter, but to live in the pleasant Company of those elemental Bodies, which he hath fashion'd in a most artificial Manner. When he creates a human Soul, and conveys it into an organiz'd Body, 'tis not that it should be there as Water in a Vessel, or as a King in his Palace; it lives not there as an assisting Form, or as an outward Cause of the Body's Operations; but 'tis united to it by a very strict Union, and serves as an essential Form. 'Tis the Principle of our Life, the internal Cause of Motion, of Sense, and of Understanding. So that, to speak properly, Man cannot be said to be altogether of a spiritual Nature, as the holy Angels, nor a single Body, as the Sun and the Stars; but he is made up of both. Therefore, if our Souls wish to depart out of this earthly Tabernacle, 'tis not out of any Hatred of it as 'tis in it self and its proper Nature; for none ever hated his own Body, every one seeks to nourish and cherish it: But by Accident, because of the Vanity and Corruption to which Sin hath enthrall'd it; we desire earnestly to depart out of it, to a Place where Righteousness and true Holiness reign, that we might

be with the Lord *Jesus*, to behold him nearer. 'Tis therefore an undoubted Truth, That unless the Body partakes of the same Happiness and Glory of the Soul, Man cannot be said to be perfectly and entirely happy. I confess 'tis a great Joy to us, to know, that when our Soul casts off this earthly Body, it enters into the eternal Dwellings of Heaven, whither it goes to behold the Face of the Father of Lights; but this holy Joy is disturb'd with sad Reflections, and this heavenly Sweetness is strangely altered with the bitter Considerations of this poor Body cast into the Earth, and left to the Mercy of the crawling Worms. For 'tis a most hateful Thing to view our Body rotting and turning to Ashes; that Body that was our Pavilion, our Palace; nay, more than so, that was half Part of our selves. Therefore, if we will render our Joy accomplish'd, and apply an effectual Comfort to our Souls, we must nourish and entertain this pleasant Assurance, that the Ruin of our Bodies, for which we lament so much, shall not be eternal; but as our Body falls down by Death, it shall rise again one Day at the general Resurrection. This is one of the noblest and most excellent Mysteries of our *Christian Religion*, and one of its most glorious Advantages. The Wisdom of the World, with all its Reasonings, and the heathenish Philosophy, with its rarest Subtilties, could never attain to this wholsome and comfortable Doctrine. Therefore, when St. *Paul* preached to the Council of *Athens*, he was heard with Admiration, until he had spoken to them of the Resurrection; as soon as he began to mention that, they laugh'd at him.

Therefore, while *humane Reason* remains in its Darkness and *natural Ignorance*, it cannot of it self find out this glorious Mystery. But as soon as 'tis enlightned with the *Light* from *above*, it discovers its most remarkable Circumstances, and acknowledgeth the *Justice* and *Necessity* of the *future Resurrection* of our Bodies.

Firſt, Since Rewards and Puniſhments ought to be proportionable and anſwerable to him who is to puniſh and reward, we muſt of Neceſſity believe the *Reſurrection* of our Bodies; otherwiſe the Pains of the wicked cannot be extream, and the Happineſs of the godly can never be abſolute and perfect.

Secondly, As when a Traytor is executed, Men are wont to faſten to the Scaffold, or to burn in the Fire, the Inſtruments and Tools with which he had aſſaulted or offended his Prince; in the ſame manner, the Bodies of the prophane and impious Varlets, of the Traytors againſt God's divine Majeſty ought to be treated, they ought to be eternally puniſhed with their Souls in Hell-fire; becauſe they have been the unhappy Inſtruments employed in affronting their Creator.

Thirdly, The Body is not only the Inſtrument employed by the wicked againſt God, but encourageth them, and hurries them on in Sin. For its Humours ſtir it up, inflame, and carry it to evil Acts. For Example, its ſanguine Conſtitution makes it luxurious, and inclinable to the filthy Luſts of the Fleſh; its Choler hurries it to violent and furious Actions; its Melancholy prompts it to the moſt horrid and helliſh Attempts. So that if ſuch are to be puniſhed who cauſe us to perform hainous Deeds, as well as the Actors, it belongs to God's Juſtice to inflict upon the Body, as well as upon the Soul, eternal Puniſhments.

Fourthly, *To every Thing there is a Seaſon, and a Time to every Purpoſe under the Heavens*, Eccleſ. 3. As the Body of the Wicked and Reprobate hath had its good Things, and its Satisfactions during this Life, it muſt needs have alſo in another Life its Puniſhments and its Torments.

Fifthly, But, not to forget the Reaſons which have a Relation to the Faithful, and which are the Pillars and Supporters of our Faith and Hope; we may ſay, That *Jeſus Chriſt* is no leſs able to ſave us, than *Adam*

was to destroy us. Now *Adam* having lost both Soul and Body, we must conclude, that it belongs to *Christ* to save them both. Therefore the Body is to rise again, that it may partake of that Salvation or Redemption procured to us by this great Saviour.

Sixthly, *As we have born the Image of the first Man, who was of the Dust of the Earth, we must also bear the Image of the second Man, who came from Heaven,* 1 Cor. 15. Now we bear not this Image at present, in this Life; we must therefore bear it in another.

Seventhly, God hath not made a Covenant with Part of Man, but with all Man, composed of Soul and Body. The Body therefore must needs rise again, that it might partake of the eternal Fruits of Glory and Happiness, which are promised to us by his divine *Covenant.*

Eighthly, God is not only stiled, *The Father of Spirits, and the God of the Spirits of all Flesh*; Heb. 12. *But he declares himself to be the God of* Abraham *and of his Posterity,* Numb. 16. 27. He is not only the God of the Soul, or the God of the Body alone; but he is the God of believing Persons, of both their Souls and Bodies. From hence it necessarily follows, That the Bodies of such as are deceased, are not utterly destroyed, for God will raise them up again. With this Argument *Christ* stopt the Mouths of the *Sadducees,* who denied the Resurrection; *Concerning the Resurrection of the Dead* (said he) *Have you not read what God himself speaks to you? I am the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Isaac, *and the God of* Jacob; *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living.*

Ninthly, God hath adopted us to himself by *Jesus Christ,* according to the good Pleasure of his Will, to make us the Heirs of his Kingdom, and Co-heirs of his Son. From this Passage we may gather a certain Assurance of the Resurrection; for when this Father of Mercies shall see our Bodies lying in the Dust, out of his Tenderness and Compassion, he will say, There are the Bodies of my Children, the Members of mine only

only Son. 'Tis not convenient to leave them always in that ſhameful State, in the Bowels of the Earth. That love that I bear to them cannot ſuffer it. Doubtleſs 'twas this Conſideration that cauſed the Apoſtle to call the Redemption of our Bodies *Adoption*, for by that he aſſures us, that he ſhall fetch out of their Graves the Bodies of all them, whom he hath adopted; and that our future Reſurrection is an Effect, and a neceſſary Conſequence of our Adoption.

Tenthly, If we conſider Death in it ſelf, as 'tis in its own Nature, we ſhall find it to be the Wages of Sin, and a Puniſhment of our Crimes. Now *Jeſus Chriſt* hath paid for us theſe Wages, and ſatisfied for all our Sins, aboliſhing them in his Croſs. We may therefore conclude, that Death is to be deſtroyed in reſpect of Believers, and that their Bodies muſt needs riſe again.

Eleventhly, St. *Paul* aſſures us, that *Jeſus Chriſt is the Saviour of his Body*. Now the myſtical Body of this great God and Redeemer, conſiſts not only in the infinite Number of Souls purchaſed with his Blood, but alſo in the Union of all the Bodies, that have been the Companions of theſe bleſſed Souls: Therefore as he hath ſaved our Souls from ſpiritual Death and eternal Damnation, he muſt alſo ſave our Bodies from corporal Death, and redeem them from the Power of the Grave.

Twelfthly, If Death did for ever detain our Bodies in the Grave, we could not ſay, to ſpeak properly, that our Saviour hath ſwallow'd up Death into Victory, and that he hath deſtroyed the Sepulchre; for in ſuch a Caſe Death and the Grave would remain victorious, and triumph eternally over theſe miſerable Bodies.

Thirteenthly, Our Saviour hath ſuffered in his Soul and in his Body, and by that Means hath purchaſed to himſelf both our Souls and Bodies, according to St. *Paul*'s excellent Intimation, *You are bought with a Price, glorify therefore God in your Bodies, and in your Souls,*

that belong unto God. From hence we muſt conclude, that this glorious Saviour would be deprived of Part of that which he hath purchaſed by his ineſtimable Sufferings, if our Bodies always continued in the Power of Death.

Fourteenthly, The holy Ghoſt hath ſanctified our Bodies and made them his Temples, as St. *Paul* teacheth us, *Know ye not that you are the Temple of God, and that the Holy Ghoſt dwelleth in you?* From hence the Reſurrection of our Bodies muſt needs follow as a neceſſary Conſequence. For can we imagine that God will ſuffer the Temple of his Holineſs to continue for ever in its Ruins and Deſolation? Will he not rear up again the noble Pavilion of his Glory, caſt down by Death?

Fifteenthly, God hath predeſtinated us to make us conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the firſt-born amongſt many Brethren. Now the Soul and the Body of this only begotten of the Father, that were ſeparated by Death, have been joined again in his glorious Reſurrection, and received into Heaven. Therefore our Souls, that depart out of the World to enter into Paradiſe, muſt return again to their Bodies, that we may aſcend up to Heaven both in Soul and Body. All the Difference that appears between Chriſt and us, is, that the precious Body of our noble Captain, could not be ſubject to Corruption, but was raiſed again as ſoon as it fell, becauſe of that ſtrict and perſonal Union, between his Humanity and Divinity; whereas the moſt Part of all other Bodies are corrupted and reduced to Aſhes.

Sixteenthly, We have the ſame holy Spirit, and divine Vertue dwelling in us, which was in our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, the efficient Cauſe of his Reſurrection, altho' not in the ſame Meaſure and Degree; therefore it will produce in us the ſame Effect, and raiſe our Bodies alſo from the Duſt. St. *Paul* makes uſe of this Reaſon in the 8th of the *Romans*, *If the Spirit of him that raiſed up* Jeſus *from the Dead, dwelleth in you, he*

that

that raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, ſhall alſo quicken your mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Seventeenthly, The dead Body that toucheth the Bones of the Prophet *Eliſha* revived again on a ſudden. We have more Cauſe to expect the Reſurrection of our Bodies, becauſe our Bodies don't only touch *Jeſus Chriſt* dead and raiſen again, but we are become one Body with him, Fleſh of his Fleſh, and Bone of his Bone: I am (ſaid he) *The Reſurrection and the Life, he that liveth and believeth in me, ſhall never die; and he that believeth in me, tho' he were dead, yet ſhall he live*, Eph. 5. John 11.

Eighteenthly, God hath imprinted upon our Bodies his own Signet, and the Marks of his Love; he hath given them viſible and palpable Aſſurances of their future Bleſſedneſs. Under the *Old Teſtament*, Believers carried the *Seal* of the *Covenant* of God in their Fleſh; for Circumciſion was the Seal of the Righteouſneſs obtained by Faith and Hope of the bleſſed Immortality. They alſo eat the Fleſh of the paſchal Lamb which was a Type of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the true Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World. Likewiſe under the *new Covenant*, God conſecrates to himſelf our Bodies by the *Waters of Baptiſm*, and by the *Bread* and *Wine* of the *Lord's-Supper*. So by this means he aſſures them of a joyful and glorious Reſurrection. For if by eating of this Bread, and drinking of this Wine, we eat and drink ſpiritually the Fleſh and Blood of *Jeſus Chriſt*, it is an infallible Aſſurance, that this divine Saviour will raiſe us up again at the End of the World, as he himſelf promiſeth; *Whoſo eateth my Fleſh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal Life, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt Day*, St. John 6. 54.

Nineteenthly, The Body of Believers endures many Aſſaults and Evils for *Chriſt's* ſake, and for his holy Profeſſion. 'Tis often expoſed to the moſt ſhameful and moſt cruel Torments, and partakes in the ſame Sufferings as he did on Earth. Therefore 'tis juſt that it ſhould partake in his Triumphs, Glory and eternal Happineſs,

Happiness, *It is a faithful Saying; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer we shall also reign with him. We always bear about in our Bodies the Dying of the Lord* Jesus, *that the Life of* Jesus *might be made manifest in our mortal Flesh.* 2 Tim. 2. 2 Cor. 4.

Twentiethly, There is nothing that God doth in vain, he never bestows upon us useless Desires; therefore to what purpose hath he kindled in us such an earnest Longing to see this wretched Body out of the Misery and Corruption, unto which Sin hath subjected it, and in the Fruition of Glory and Immortality? As St. *Paul* tells us in these Words, *The Creature was made subject to Vanity not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in Hope, because the Creature it self also shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God:* He adds immediately after, *For we know that the whole Creation groaneth, and travelleth in Pain together until now; and not only they, but our selves also, which have the first Fruits of the Spirit; even we our selves groan within our selves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit the Redemption of our Body*, Rom. 8.

Finally, Since whatsoever God hath appointed in his eternal Counsel, must be fulfilled in Time, and all Thing, in the World attain to those Ends for which he made them, and since he created our Souls not to be alone, but to live in the Company and Fellowship with the Body; therefore this Body, which falls down by Deaths must needs arise again at the Resurrection, that the immortal Soul might return to, and dwell with it for ever.

To say that the Resurrection of our Bodies is impossible, is the greatest and most abominable Atheism in the World. 'Tis Impudence to deny the infinite Power of God, and the sacred History of the World's Creation. For if Things are in their Beings, as they are in Workings, and if their Operations are correspondent to their Natures, we must of Necessity conclude; That if there be a God of an infinite Being, he must needs have a Power answerable to his Being;

and

and by Conſequence, that this Almighty God, may without Difficulty, raiſe the Dead. If thou believeſt that God calls the Things that are not as if they were; wherefore do'ſt thou not alſo believe, that this ſame God will alſo call the Things that have been already, to reſtore them, and that Being which they have formerly enjoyed from his Almighty Hand? If thou believeſt that God hath faſhioned *Eve* out of one of her Husband's Ribs, that he made Man of the Duſt, and created this Duſt out of nothing, canſt thou not alſo believe, that God is able at the Day of the Reſurrection to make again thy Body of that Duſt into which 'tis reduced by Death? If thou believeſt that God hath breathed into *Adam's* Noſtrils the Breath of Life, that he hath created thy Soul, and infuſed it into thy Body, where it was never before, how canſt thou queſtion his Power, of returning one Day the ſame Soul into the ſame Body, where it formerly made its Abode? In ſhort, if thou believeſt that the Holy Ghoſt by moving upon the Waters, hath cauſed ſo many beautiful and noble Creatures to appear, and that he hath made Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs, can'ſt thou not be alſo perſwaded, that this ſame Holy Ghoſt can ſhew his Power among the Graves, and fetch thy Body out of the dark Shadows of Death, to introduce it into the Light of the Living.

Thou ſeeſt by Experience, that every Day a new Houſe is built up of old Materials, and doſt thou wonder how the wiſe Architect, who hath built the great World by his Word alone, can gather up the old Pieces and Materials of this little World, to make up a new Building, adorned with divine Graces and Beauty? Shall the Statue-maker be able to reſtore again his bruiſed Image reduced to Aſhes, and ſhall not God be able to reſtore Man, created after his own Image and Likeneſs, to his primitive State and Being? In a Word, let the Difficulties ſeem never ſo great, remember (chriſtian Soul) what the Angel *Gabriel* told the bleſſed Virgin, *With God nothing ſhall be impoſſible.*

I know very well that this is an old Maxim in Philosophy; *From Privation to the Habit there is no Returning.* That is to say, when once we are deprived of, and have lost a natural Faculty, 'tis never to be recovered again. But the prophane Atheists, wrongfully abuse this Maxim against the Article of our Resurrection, for 'tis most true in Respect of natural and secondary Causes. 'Tis not to be doubted, that when the Faculties of Nature are once lost, they are not to be restor'd by human Art or Skill; and when a Man is dead, 'tis not possible for all the Creatures to bring him to Life again. But nothing is able to limit the Power of an infinite Agent. He that hath formed the wonderful Eye, and in whom we live, move and have our Being; cannot he open the Eyes of a Man born blind, and restore Life to a dead Corps? This same Philosophy, whereof the Maxims are brought against the Resurrection, declares openly, *That God can do all Things that imply no Contradiction.* Now there is no Contradiction in believing, That God can render Life to him that had lost it; and that what is fallen down by Death, should rise again by the Resurrection. To the End that this Resurection of our Bodies might seem less strange, God hath been pleased to give us in Nature many Images and Resemblances. I am perswaded (*believing Souls*) that you will not be displeased if I mention here some of the Chief.

As when the Sun goeth down, and the Earth is covered with the dark Shadows of the Night, Man's Declining and the Darkness of the Grave is represented: Likewise, when this King of the Stars rises, when he brings with him the Day over our Heads; there is a beautiful and perfect Image of the Resurrection.

Secondly, When the Moon parts with all its Light and Splendor, which it borrows from the Sun, when it covers it self with a Veil of Darkness, 'tis the Image of Death, and a Representation of that Veil which it draws over our Eyes; but when the Sun begins

begins to look upon it again, and by that means it recovers its former Brightneſs and Glory, it diſcovers before our Eyes in a manner, that which ſhall happen to our Bodies, when the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhall riſe and caſt upon them his favourable Aſpect.

Thirdly, The Spring, Summer, and Autumn, follow one another, and the Winter ſhews us an Image of Death. But when the Sun begins to return again over our Heads, when it covers the Earth with a beautiful Green, and revives the ſleeping Vertue of Nature, it expreſſeth to us the Reſurrection in lively Colours.

Fourthly, The Trees that are in Winter without Flowers, Fruits, or Leaves, diſcover to us the hideous Aſpect of Death, that ſtrips Man's Body, and deprives him of all that is beautiful and pleaſant to the Eye. But when the ſame Trees flouriſh again, and are loaden with freſh Leaves and Fruits, they puts us in mind of the bleſſed Reſurrection of our Bodies.

Fifthly, The Seeds that corrupt and rot in the Ground repreſent our Bodies rotten in the Grave; but when the Seeds appear above Ground and flouriſh, they expreſs excellently well the bleſſed State of our Bodies, riſing again to a new Life, and recovering a perfect Beauty. This Similitude the Son of God himſelf recommends to us: *If the Grain of Wheat which falls to the Earth, doth not die, it remains alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much Fruit*, Joh. 12. And the Apoſtle St. *Paul* inſiſts at large upon this Compariſon; thereupon he exclaims againſt the ſtupid Atheiſts, who will not believe that a dead Body can revive again, *O Fool, that which thou ſoweſt, is not quickned, except it die*, 2 Cor. 15.

Sixthly, I find more wonderful what is ſaid of certain Herbs, which riſe again out of their Aſhes; for Example, if you burn *Mugwort, in lat. Artemiſia*, to Aſhes, and caſt the Aſhes upon the Earth, you ſhall ſee the ſame Herb grow again. Many have tried and found this by Experience: The ſame is reported of a Kind of Palm-Tree; and becauſe in the Greek Φοινὶξ, a

Palm

a Palm, is called *Phœnix*, this Experiment hath given Occasion to the Fable of the *Phœnix*, a Bird that is said to revive again out of its own Marrow and Ashes. Who will offer to deny, that this is an excellent Expression of the Resurrection of our Bodies?

Seventhly, There are also several Sorts of Insects, that represent to us Death and the Resurrection: As the Silk-worms; for when these small Creatures have finished their Work, and spun out that Silk with which the Garments and stately Attire of Kings and Princes are made, they bury themselves in a Tomb which they build; afterwards they become like a little Bean, which hides under its thin Skin the Formation of a white Butterfly. The same is observed of the Caterpillars, for when they seem to be stark Dead, they creep out of their little Sepulchres in the Form of Butterflies, of so many rare and various Colours, that they deserve Admiration; so that many curious Persons keep them in their Closets amongst their Rarities.

Eighthly, Amongst the Beasts also, some seem to be dead for several Months of the Year, being without Sense or Motion, but afterwards they awake again, or rather they begin a new Life to move about as they did before.

Ninthly, But we need go no farther than our selves to find the Image of Death and of the Resurrection. For is there any Thing that can express Death more perfectly than our dead Sleep, that stupifies our Senses, puts a stop to the Spirits of our Bodies, and binds up our most active Faculties? So that we have then Eyes without seeing, Ears without hearing, a Nose and cannot smell, and a living Body but we have no feeling. But as soon as such a Person comes to awake again, to open his Eyes, to stir and to act, he represents a most perfect Image of the Resurrection.

I might also add amongst the Images of Death and the Resurrection, the several Changes and Alterations that happen to the *States* and *Empires* of the World. For oft-times they appear as dead and buried, but afterwards

terwards they riſe again from their Falls, and march out of their Obſcurity, as in a glorious Reſurrection. But I ſhall wave theſe Similitudes, and conſider only ſuch as the *Church* of God in ſeveral Ages have recommended to us as Types of the future Reſurrection of our Bodies.

Firſt, *Noah* and his Family, (in which all the *Church* of God at that Time was comprehended) remained in the Ark as in a floating Coffin, during the Space of one Hundred and fifty Days. But after the Deluge, God cauſed them to march out of that Ark. In the ſame manner, after our Bodies ſhall have been in the Graves ſo many Years or Ages (as God hath appointed in his wonderful Wiſdom) he will draw them out again by his infinite Power, and will ſay to us all, *Come out and appear to Judgment.*

Secondly, The People of *Iſrael* went down into *Egypt*, and dwelt there 200 Years, or thereabouts, as in a Kind of Sepulchre, but God deliver'd them at laſt, and cauſed them to go up to the Land of *Canaan*, as by a bleſſed Reſurrection.

Thirdly, The *Red-Sea*, into which this People went down, and in which *Pharaoh* with all his Hoſt was drowned, is an Image of our Grave, and the great Power which God diſcovered to make this People paſs thro' that dreadful Sea, and to go up out of its Depths, as by a Miracle, ſhews to the blindeſt Underſtandings, that Omnipotence which God will one Day manifeſt in drawing his People out of the Depths of Death, that we may be able to ſing the Song of *Moſes* and of the *Lamb.*

Fourthly, When the *Ark* of *God's Covenant* was taken captive by the *Philiſtines*, and ſhut up in the Houſe of *Dagon*, it was a Type of thoſe Bodies which God hath choſen for his *Ark*, and which are to remain for a time in Satan's Priſons, under the Command of Death.

But when the *Philiſtines* ſent back again this Ark, and that the Children of *Iſrael* received it with outward Expreſſions of great Joy, 'tis a plain Deſcription of

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that which shall happen, when God shall oblige Death to open all its Prisons, and release all its Prisoners; a Description, I say, of the wonderful Joy of the Inhabitants of the *celestial Canaan.*

Fifthly, *Babylon* also, where the *Church of Israel* remained Captive threescore and ten Years, is a symbolical Representation of the Grave, where these miserable Bodies are to continue in Captivity. Therefore by Allusion, the Prophet stiles it, *A Lake without Water*; but the Deliverance of *Israel* from the *Babylonish* Captivity, is a Type of our *glorious Resurrection.* For that Reason the holy Men of God speak of it in such Terms as have respect to the Resurrection of our Bodies from the Grave.

Sixthly, *Solomon's Temple*, that was demolished and pull'd down by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and that lay many Years in a desolate Condition, is another Type of the Body of Believers destroyed by the Devil, and remaining for a Time in the Dust. But when the *Jews* were returned from *Babylon*, they reared up the Walls of this Temple, and builded it again. This represents the Resurrection of our Bodies, the Temple of our living God. Our Saviour had an Eye to this Allusion, when he told the *Jews*, *Destroy this Temple, and I will build it up again in three Days.* For his beloved Disciple adds immediately after, that he spoke of the Temple of his Body.

Seventhly, You may find the Types and Images of the same Thing in many of the Faithful, in *Joseph*, *Daniel*, and *Jonas.* For as the Prison of *Egypt*, the *Lion's Den*, and the *Whale's Belly*, represents the Grave; likewise, when *Darius* caused *Daniel* to be taken out of the Den, and when God ordered the Whale to cast up *Jonas* upon the dry Ground, the Resurrection is thereby described.

Eightbly, But there is no Passage, Type, nor Figure, more plain in the Old Testament, concerning the Resurrection, than that of the 37th of *Ezekiel.*

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For that the Children of *Israel* might understand the Greatness of God's Power, able to free them from the *Babylonish* Captivity, he caused the Resurrection of the Dead to appear before his Prophet. He carried him away into a large Field, covered all over with dead and dry Bones. At God's Command these Bones drew near to one another, and began to be joined; afterwards the Sinews appeared, the Flesh cover'd them, and the Skin was stretched over them; then a Breath came from the four Winds upon these dead Bodies, entred into them, and they rose up alive upon their Feet, so that they seemed as a great Army.

But God hath not only represented the Resurrection by many illustrious and excellent Types, but he hath also expressly foretold it by the holy Prophets: *Isaiah* speaks of this Mystery in an excellent Manner, *Thy dead Men shall live together, with my dead Body shall they rise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust, for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth shall cast out the Dead*, Isa. 26. And there can be nothing plainer than the Prophecy of the Prophet *Daniel*, *And many of them that sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt*, Dan. 12.

Therefore, in Hopes of the Resurrection, the Patriarchs were very careful of their Tombs. *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, had no Inheritance in the Land of *Canaan*, and yet he was very desirous to buy, for Himself and Family, a Burying-place. When *Jacob* lay upon his Death-bed, he commanded his Son *Joseph*, *Deal kindly and truly with me, bury me not I pray thee in* Egypt, *but I will lie with my Fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of* Egypt, *and bury me in their Burying-place*, Gen. 47. And when *Joseph* was ready to yield up his Soul unto God, he told his Brethren, *That God would surely visit them, and that they should carry his Bones from thence*, Gen. 50.

All the Faithful of the *Old Testament* have publickly declared their Expectation of this blessed Resurrection

from the Dead; as may appear by that notable Passage of *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not anothers*, Job 19. As may also appear by the magnificent Words of *David*, *I will behold thy Face in Righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy Likeness*, Psal. 17.

Those blessed Martyrs, mentioned in the Book of *Maccabees*, were so well perswaded of this Doctrine, that they had the Courage willingly to offer their Bodies to Death and Torments the most dreadful. You may hear one speaking boldly to King *Antiochus*, that most cruel Tyrant, who would have forc'd him to break the Law of God; *Thou Murderer, thou deprivest us of Life, but the King of the World shall raise us up at the Resurrection, to an eternal Life, since we die for his Laws.* Another animated with an holy Zeal and an heroick Spirit, delivers his Tongue and Hands to be cut off, with this Saying; *I have received these Things from Heaven, but I now despise them for the Laws of my God. For I hope he will restore them to me again.* A third slighting the Tyrant's Threats and Promises, uttered these excellent Sayings; *It is better for me to leave the Expectations of Men to look for what God promises, that I shall again rise by his Power.* But nothing appears more admirable than the Mother of those illustrious Children, when speaking to the Seventh, the youngest of all, she uses this Language; *I know not how you were formed in my Womb, for I never gave you a Spirit, nor Life, nor gathered together your Limbs into a Body; but the Creator of the World, the Author of Nature, who by his Power and Goodness has form'd the Beginning of all Things; He will of his Mercy restore to you again your Spirit and Life, because you now value not your selves for the sake of his Laws.*

Martha, the Sister of *Lazarus*, was well acquainted with this Mystery, as is to be proved by what she told

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our Saviour Chriſt, *I know that my Brother ſhall riſe again at the Reſurrection at the laſt Day:* And the *Phariſees* maintained the Belief of the Reſurrection from the Dead againſt the *Sadducees*, who denied the Reſurrection and Immortality of the Soul. Therefore when St. *Paul* was to anſwer for himſelf before the *Jews* Tribunal, where half were *Phariſees*, and half were *Sadducees*, he made this crafty Profeſſion, *I am a* Phariſee, *and the Son of a* Phariſee; *for the Hope of the Reſurrection of the Dead I am called in queſtion:* And when he made his Apology before *Felix*, the Governour, he ſpake in this manner, *This, I confeſs unto thee, that after the Way which they call Hereſy, ſo worſhip I the God of my Fathers, believing all Things which are written in the Law and the Prophets, and have Hope towards God, which they themſelves alſo allow, that there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the Dead, both of the Juſt and of the Unjuſt.*

As the *Jews* of our Time have forſaken God, God hath alſo forſaken and given them over to a reprobate Senſe; for as they ſet aſide the infinite Merits of the *Death* and *Paſſion* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, they vainly perſwade themſelves, that their Sins are ſufficiently expiated by their own Deaths. Notwithſtanding the grievous Corruptions that are to be found in their Doctrines, they depart out of this Life, in Hopes of riſing again one Day. For that Reaſon they are careful in waſhing their dead Bodies, in Burying them with Honour and Decency; and when they have thus laid them in their Graves, they bow themſelves three Times towards the Earth, and caſt behind them Graſs newly pluckt up from the Ground. By which Ceremony, they would have us underſtand, that the Corps which they lay in the Earth, ſhall one Day riſe again and puſh forth, according to the Prophet's Expreſſion, *Your Bones ſhall grow as the Graſs.*

But this Article of the Reſurrection of our Bodies, which is found in ſome few Paſſages of the *Old Teſtament*, is to be ſeen almoſt in every Page of the *New*, and the Texts concerning this Truth, are ſo plain and

expreſs, that 'tis not poſſible to reject this wholſom Doctrine, but we muſt at the ſame time abjure the Chriſtian Religion, and give the Lye to the holy Ghoſt.

That our Faith might be the better ſettled, God hath been pleaſed not only to publiſh this Reſurrection from the Dead by his Prophets and Apoſtles, he hath not only diſcover'd to us many excellent and delightful Types and Figures of the Truth; but to give us a more experimental Teſtimony of his Power, he hath raiſed ſeveral from the Dead. In the *Old Teſtament* God raiſed up two Children, one at the Prayers of the Prophet *Elijah*, the other at the Requeſt of *Eliſha* his Succeſſor, 1 *Kings* 17. And when the dead Body had been laid in *Eliſha*'s Grave, and touched his Bones, it returned to Life again, 2 *Kings* 13. And during our Saviour's Abode on Earth, he raiſed to Life the Daughter of *Jairus* that was dead, the Widow's Son of *Nain*, who was carried out of the Gate to be buried; and *Lazarus*, who had been four Days lying in his Grave, whoſe Body began to ſtink, *Matth.* 9. *Luke* 7. When this merciful Saviour gave up the Ghoſt upon the Croſs, *The Graves were opened, and many Bodies of Saints which ſlept, aroſe and came out of the Graves after his Reſurrection, and went into the holy City and appeared unto many*, *Matth.* 27. After his Aſcenſion, he raiſed from the Dead, *Dorcas*, a charitable Widow, at the Prayers of St. *Peter*, to comfort the poor Widows that wept for her; and a young Man, named *Eutyches*, was reſtored to Life by the Means of St. *Paul*, that the Congregation of Believers might be comforted, who were troubled at his unexpected Fall, and ſudden Death.

But chiefly we have the Example of our Lord, who hath raiſed himſelf up by a divine Power. This glorious Inſtance, is able not only to excite our Admiration, but alſo to ſettle our Faith, and nouriſh our Hopes. For the Reſurrection of other Perſons ſhews what God can do, but the Reſurrection of Chriſt declares to us what God will do, and is an Earneſt to aſſure us of our future Reſurrection. 'Tis not poſſible

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to believe as we ought, that Jeſus Chriſt is riſen from the Dead, but we muſt alſo, by a neceſſary Conſequence, believe that he will raiſe us likewiſe. This St. *Paul* endeavours to teach us, *If we believe that* Jeſus Chriſt *is dead and riſen, even ſo them alſo which ſleep in* Jeſus, *will God bring with him*, 1 Theſſ. 4. As the Head is, ſo ſhall the Members be. As the firſt Fruits are, ſo ſhall the Reſt of the Harveſt be. The ſame Apoſtle labours to perſuade this Truth in theſe excellent Words, *Chriſt is riſen from the dead, and become the firſt Fruits of them that ſlept; for ſince by Man came Death, by Man came alſo the Reſurrection of the Dead; for as in* Adam *all die, ſo in* Chriſt *ſhall all be made alive: But every Man in his own Order,* Chriſt *the firſt Fruits, afterward they that are* Chriſt's *at his Coming.*

Againſt this Holy and divine Doctrine ſome object, that there are Bodies conſum'd by Fire, and burnt to Aſhes. But what follows from hence? For whether the Bodies be reduced to Duſt or Aſhes, it matters not, God is able to reſtore them, and render to them their primitive Forms. Since certain Herbs (conſumed to Aſhes) riſe again out of the Ground by a natural Inclination, as we have already obſerved; and ſince Art is ſo induſtrious to make tranſparent Bodies (of an extraordinary Beauty) of melted Aſhes; ſhall not God, who is ſo infinitely above all Abilities of Nature created by him, and of all Arts and Sciences which proceed from his Direction, be able of Aſhes to compoſe a beautiful and perfect Body?

Others pretend next, that a great many Bodies have been drowned in the Seas, and ſwallow'd up in the Waters; I acknowledge that to be true: But I affirm, that God is altogether as able to draw a Body out of the Depth of the Sea, as out of the Bowels of the Earth. He who hath preſcribed Bounds to this great Sea, who dries up its vaſt Concavities, and lays open its bottomleſs Bottom; hath not he a Command over this Sea? Cannot he oblige it to reſtore thoſe Bodies that have been committed to its Keeping, as when he

commanded the Whale to bring again to Land the Prophet *Jonas*, whom it had swallowed up alive?

Some object, that there are Bodies devoured by the Beasts, which have been their Food, and have been turned into their Substance. But this Objection is not to be valued. For when a humane Body shall have passed through the Bowels of the Beasts, and been changed a thousand and a thousand Times into their Substance, there is nothing that can hinder God from restoring them again at the Day of the Resurrection. For those Animals shall never rise again; 'tis therefore nothing to the Purpose to enquire after them, when the Body shall re-assume that which they shall have devoured, and turned into their own Substance. The strongest and most plausible Objection concerns *the Anthropophagi, the Eaters of Men.* For 'tis very well known, that in the *Indies* there are some Savages so barbarous as to feed upon humane Flesh, and to esteem it as their greatest Dainties. Some answer to this, that such Kind of Inhumanities are not ordinary, and that such wretched *Indians* never practise such hainous Things but in urgent Necessity, or when they purpose to revenge themselves upon their Enmies. But such as have given an Account of the *New found America*, relate, That in some Provinces, there have been such cruel and inhumane Savages, as nor only to devour the Flesh of their Enemies whom they sacrificed to their Idols, but also of their deareſt Friends, whom they cut in pieces in their Shambles. These same Historians tell us, That some of the barbarous People are so impiously mistaken, as to reckon it an Act of Piety and Duty to their Parents and Friends, to give them a Sepulchre in their own Stomachs. Again, they say, that there are some, who like so many mad Dogs feed upon Infants, and hunt after Men, as we do after wild Beasts of the Field. In case all these Relations should be true, I must desire my Reader to take notice there are two Kinds of Parts that compose the humane Body, the one solid, as the Bones and Nerves, and so essential

eſſential to it, that without them it would ceaſe from being any longer a humane Body; the other Parts are adventitious, accidental and changeable, they ſerve to maintain it almoſt as the Food and Nouriſhment. Now, this I affirm, as an undoubted Truth, that when it happens that Men feed upon their own Kind, God takes care, by this wonderful Providence, that the eſſential and ſolid Parts of the Man devoured, never enter into the Subſtance or Compoſition of the ſolid Parts of the Devourer. At the great Day of the Reſurrection the Bodies will reaſſume all their eſſential and ſolid Parts, without which they cannot be true Bodies; but they ſhall not need the accidental and fluid Parts, as are the Humours and Blood; for then they ſhall have no more inward Heat to conſume them, and no more Hunger and Thirſt. Therefore they ſhall never have any Need of Meat or of Drink, or of any other Thing whatſoever, to ſerve them inſtead of Nouriſhment. Let the Metals be never ſo much mingled, the Goldſmith ſeparates them with eaſe. Thus, let our humane Bodies be never ſo much altered and ſhuffled together, God will be able enough to ſeparate and diſtinguiſh them one from another. When the Goldſmith will ſeparate the Metals, he caſts them into the Melting-pot, and cauſeth them to paſs through the Fire; but God, who can do all Things without Means, hath no Need of the Fire, or of the Melting-Pot; for by his Word, at the twinkling of an Eye, he can cauſe this Separation to be made; and render to every Body, that which neceſſarily belongs to its Compoſition. In a Word, if the Difficulty ſhould be far greater than 'tis, and if the Reſolution of this Objection were not ſo eaſy to be made, it ſhould not leſſen our Faith, or cauſe us to doubt of the Reſurrection of our Bodies.

When it concerns Things that the holy Scripture doth not expreſsly declare and decide, or that cannot be drawn from it by a neceſſary Conſequence, 'tis lawful to diſpute either for, or againſt ſuch Things; but if it

concerns such as this sacred Writ, inspired of God, plainly sets forth, our Faith must learn her Duty, to submit to Almighty God, and believe that there is nothing impossible with him. Now this Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead is so expresly and plainly found in this holy Scripture, that it seems as visible as the Beams of the Noon-Sun. Many Questions are made upon this Subject, some are of that Importance, that an Answer will give Satisfaction upon this excellent Subject. First they enquire by whom, and by whose Power shall the Resurrection be effected? The Scripture gives an Occasion to make this Inquiry, for it ascribes it sometimes to the Father, as in the 5th of St. *John*, *The Father raises the Dead, and quickens them*; sometimes to the Son, as in *Philippians* 3. Jesus Christ *shall change our vile Bodies according to his mighty Working, whereby he is able to subdue all Thing unto himself*; and sometimes to the Holy Ghost, as in *Rom.* 8. *If the Spirit of him who hath raised* Jesus *from the Dead dwelleth in you, he that hath raised up* Jesus *from the Dead, shall quicken your mortal Bodies by his Holy Spirit that dwelleth in you.* This Difficulty may thus be resolved; all the outward Works of God, that concern the Creatures, are common to the Three Persons of the most holy, most glorious, and most wonderful Trinity.

So that we shall rise again by the infinite Power of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless, the Resurrection is especially ascribed to the Son, as he is Judge of the Quick and the Dead. In order to the Discharge of that glorious Employment, all Power hath been committed to him in Heaven, and in Earth, and in the Seas.

2. Some enquire further, When shall this Resurrection be? I answer, that it shall be in the Day which God hath appointed to judge all the World, by the Man whom he hath ordained, *Act.* 17. You are not to expect from me, *Christians*, that I should point out to you precisely the Day when this shall come to pass,

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for it belongs not to us to know the Times and the Seaſons, which God hath reſerved to himſelf. 'Tis true, we may ſee that moſt Part of the Prophecies are already fulfilled, ſo that we may ſay in general Terms, *The Lord is at hand, and our Salvation is nearer than when we believed*, Phil. 4. Rom. 13.

Nevertheleſs, I cannot undertake to mark out unto you this glorious Day, nor to tell you the Year nor Age when this ſhall be. There is no Man upon Earth, nor Angel in Heaven, that is able to ſpeak of it with Certainty. Therefore *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf informs us, *But of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only*, Mat. 24. If our Saviour ſaith more, *That the Son himſelf knoweth not the day*, Mark 13. we muſt underſtand this as he is a Man, and during his Abode in the World, for as he is God, he knoweth all Things from all Eternity. And now that he is glorified, as he is Man, he underſtands all Things. But he hath hid from Men the Time of his Coming, that we might expect him at every Moment. As he tells the holy Apoſtles, *Watch therefore, for ye know not what Hour the Lord doth come; but know this, that if the good Man of the Houſe had known in what Watch the Thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have ſuffered his Houſe to be broken up*, Mat. 24. He writes in the ſame Language to the Angel of the Church of *Sardis*; *Remember how thou haſt received and heard, and hold faſt and repent; if therefore thou ſhalt not watch, I will come to thee as a Thief, and thou ſhalt not know what Hour I will come upon thee.* The firſt Chriſtians were very well acquainted with this wholeſome Doctrine, as we may judge by this Paſſage of St. *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians*; *But of the Times and of the Seaſons, Brethren, ye have no Need that I write unto you, for your ſelves know perfectly, that the Day of the Lord ſo cometh as the Thief in the Night. For when they ſhall ſay Peace and Safety, then ſudden Deſtruction cometh upon them, as Travail upon a Woman with Child, and they ſhall not eſcape*, 1 Theſſ. 5. As the Days of *Noah* were, ſo

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shall be the Coming of the Son of Man. For as they were before the Deluge, eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in Marriage, and were not sensible of the Deluge, until it was come and carried them all away, so shall it be at the Coming of the Son of Man, *Matth.* 25.

The wise Man tells us, *That Hope delayed causeth the Heart to languish*, Prov. 13. But we must except the Hope and Expectation of the Resurrection; for when this blessed Resurrection should not come to pass yet many thousand Ages, it should not cause such as die in the Lord to languish. For while their Bodies are in their Graves, they suffer nothing; and as they are there without Sense, they cannot be impatient, no more than a Man that is in a deep Sleep. For the Soul, it enjoys in the Contemplation of God's Face, such unspeakable Satisfactions, that 'tis not capable of Grief, Sorrow, Displeasure, or the least Disturbance. St. *Peter* tells us, *That a thousand Years with God, are but as a Day*, 2 Pet. 3. We may say the same of those who are admitted to God's glorious Presence, to behold his Face; for a thousand Years, in such an happy State, appear less than one Day in this miserable Condition. The Hundreds and Thousands of Years pass away far quicker to the blessed Inhabitants of Heaven, than the Moments to such as live in Troubles upon Earth.

3. Others desire to know where this Resurrection shall happen. The Jewish Whimsyes and Extravagancies have given Occasion to this Question; for they think that the dead Bodies rise in no other Place but the holy Land. Therefore they have made another childish Fable, that the Bodies of all their Nation, that die in several Parts of the World, shall go through earthly Vaults, and roll through the secret Conveyances of this Globe, until they come to the Land of *Canaan*, where they are to arise from the Dead. And as one Errour occasions another, they say further, That they shall feel more or less Pain in their Passage, according to the Goodness, or Sins of their Lives. I need

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not ſpend any Time in the Refutation of this fooliſh and impertinent Opinion; but it may juſtly cauſe us to acknowledge the juſt Judgment of God, upon this unhappy People, who have refuſed with a deviliſh Obſtinacy, the great Saviour of the World. For becauſe they have not received the Love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved, God hath ſent them ſtrong Deluſions, that they might believe a Lye, and hath given them over to a reprobate Senſe, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. For us Chriſtians, we ſay that without ſo much adoe, where the Body is at the laſt Day, there it ſhall riſe from its Grave.

4. The next Queſtion is, what ſhall riſe from the Dead? I anſwer, that the ſame Body which falls by Death, ſhall riſe again at the general Reſurrection. If God ſhould make a new Body to join it to our Souls, it would be no more a Reſurrection, but rather a new Creation; neither ſhall we only take ſuch a Body as our own, for Things that are only alike, are not the ſame, let them be never ſo much alike; but we ſhall take again the ſame Body, which our Soul animates during its Abode here below; and if I may make uſe of the Expreſſions and Terms of Divines, it ſhall not only be the ſame Body, but alſo the ſame Individual. As in the firſt Reſurrection God creates not a new Soul, but he regenerates and ſanctifies that which was Dead in its Treſpaſſes and Sins; thus in the ſecond Reſurrection, God makes not another Body, but he only beſtows another Life upon that which was lying in Corruption, and amongſt the Dead. As when our Saviour roſe from the Dead, he made not for himſelf a new Body, but he took again that ſame which had been formed in the Womb of the Bleſſed Virgin: Likewiſe, in the general Reſurrection, he will not create for us new Bodies, but he will reſtore to us that ſame which we had from our Mother's Womb. This Argument is not to be anſwer'd: For the Reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt*, is not only the efficient or meritorious Cauſe of ours, but alſo, the Pattern and Model, or as

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the School-men tell us, 'tis the exemplary Cauſe of our future Reſurrection. But there is no Need of Arguments, when the Word of God is ſo clear and expreſs on this Subject. St. *Paul* informs us, *That the Lord ſhall change our vile Body, that this corruptible muſt put on Incorruption, this mortal muſt put on Immortality*, Phil 3. 1 Cor. 15. *And that the Life of* Jeſus *ſhall be made manifeſt in our mortal Fleſh*, 2 Cor. 4. And the holy *Job* ſaith, *Job* 19. not only *that he ſhall ſee God, but that he ſhall ſee God in his Fleſh, and that he ſhall ſee him with his Eyes:* For the ſame Reaſon, in ſome ancient Copies, in our Apoſtle's Creed, as in the Creed of *Aquila*, I find not only, *I believe the Reſurrection of the Fleſh, but I believe the Reſurrection of this Fleſh.*

5. Some ask whether the Bodies of the Wicked ſhall riſe from the Dead, as well as the Bodies of the Righteous? The *Jews*, who delight in whimſical Inventions, fancy a Reſurrection only for the Juſt, in which, Unbelievers and Reprobates have no Share. To ſtrengthen this Dream, they abuſe the Words of the firſt Pſalm, *The Wicked ſhall not ſtand in Judgment, nor Sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous. Finally*, They are ſo much beſotted with an high Conceit of themſelves, that none are righteous but of their own Nation; that none are pleaſing to God, or ought to riſe again from the Dead, but the *Iſraelites*. But we Chriſtians are brought up and inſtructed in better Doctrines; we believe without Heſitation, that all Men that are dead ſince the Beginning of the World, of every People and Nation under Heaven, ſhall riſe again at the Day of Judgment. For St. *Paul* aſſures us, *That there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the Juſt and of the Unjuſt*. *David* in the firſt *Pſalm*, ſpeaks nothing againſt this Truth, which is as clear as the Sun, and as infallible as the Heavens and the Earth; for he ſaith not that the Wicked ſhall not riſe again, but only that they ſhall not ſtand before God in Judgment, that is to ſay, that they ſhall not ſubſiſt before the Tribunal of God's Juſtice, nor be able to abide the fiery Preſence

ſence of God, angry and diſpleaſed for their Impieties. But this we may obſerve, that altho' God will raiſe up all the Men of the World, without Exception, from their Graves, there ſhall be a notable Difference between them; for he will raiſe the Wicked up, and draw them out of their Graves, as a Judge drags an Offender out of his Dungeon to ſentence him to Death. But he will raiſe again Believers as their Redeemer, that their Bodies as well as their Souls, might enjoy the bleſſed Fruits of the Redemption, purchaſed for us. Therefore this divine Saviour ſtiles them, *Children of the Reſurrection*; for none but they ſhall inherit his Bleſſings, and partake of his eternal Glory.

6. Some inquire further, in what Manner ſhall this Reſurrection be? I anſwer, That our Lord and Saviour ſhall come down from Heaven, cloathed with Light and Glory, and attended upon by the Angels of his Power, and Millions of his Saints. He ſhall be preceeded by the Cry of the Arch-angel and the Trumpet of God; for the Trumpet ſhall ſound; and as at the Sounding of the Silver Trumpet that proclaimed the *Jews* Jubilee, all the Priſons were opened, and the Priſoners ſet at Liberty; in the ſame manner, at the Sound of the laſt Trumpet, all the Priſons of Death ſhall be broke open, and the Bodies that were impriſon'd, ſhall go out; to ſpeak in the Language of the holy Ghoſt, *The Sea ſhall give up the Dead, and Death and Hell ſhall reſtore the Dead that are in them.* And as *Lazarus* roſe up as ſoon as *Jeſus Chriſt* had called to him in his Tomb, *Lazarus, come out*; likewiſe when the Voice of this great God and Saviour ſhall ſound in our Tombs, at that Moment we ſhall riſe again and appear before him. For the Hour cometh, that ſuch as are in the Graves ſhall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that ſhall here ſhall live.

7. The next Queſtion is, In what Stature of Body ſhall we riſe? Some are perſwaded that we ſhall riſe in the ſame Stature that we die. This they gather from

from St. *John*'s Deſcription of the laſt Judgment, *I ſaw the Living and the Dead, the great and ſmall ſtanding before God.* Others think that all the Elect ſhall riſe again in perfect Stature, and ſhall be all alike to our Saviour *Chriſt*, which they endeavour to prove by St. *Paul*'s Words, *We ſhall meet in a perfect Man, to the meaſure of the perfect Stature of* Chriſt.

When it concerns Things that relate to our Salvation, 'tis a reſpective Ignorance to refuſe to pry into thoſe Things which God hath concealed, or not thought proper to reveal. Therefore, as the holy Writ is ſilent concerning this, we cannot ſpeak of it with too much Sobriety. I dare not affirm, that we ſhall riſe again in the ſame Stature; I confeſs, that this Opinion, That all the Saints ſhall have a Stature like to our Saviour *Chriſt*, and that they ſhall bear his Image and Likeneſs, in that reſpect in their Bodies, contains nothing contrary to Piety. But I dare ſay, that this cannot be proved by the Words of St. *Paul*; for the Sequel of his Diſcourſe ſhews moſt evidently, that he intends not the Stature of the Body, but that of the Soul, which conſiſts in Knowledge and Holineſs.

That Opinion which appears to be moſt likely, and moſt conformable to the Analogy of Faith, is, that the Elect ſhall riſe again in perfect Stature. For the Beauty and Perfection of the Stature, contributes much to the Glory and Majeſty of the Body, without which Man cannot be ſaid to be moſt perfectly happy. Beſides, this Perfection is agreeable to that Command and Dominion, which God ſhall give to the Saints, over the Creatures, after the Reſurrection. If thoſe who die in their Childhood riſe again in the ſame Stature; if thoſe who depart in their old and decrepid Age, come out of their Graves with their feeble and infirm Bodies, how could either of them be fit for that Glory and Perfection, where nothing ſhall be amiſs or wanting? As the promiſed Land was the Type of the celeſtial *Canaan*, 'tis not without good Cauſe that the Scripture takes Notice, that there was no Body of thoſe

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that went over *Jordan* into the holy Land that was old and decrepid, unleſs it were *Joſhua* and *Caleb*, none of the reſt were threeſcore Years old. I may alſo apply to the *Jeruſalem* above, that which the Prophet ſaith of the *Jeruſalem* here below, the Type and Figure of the Celeſtial: *From thenceforth there ſhall not be any Child of a few Days old, nor no ancient Perſon who fulfilleth not his Days.*

Finally, As God created *Adam* and *Eve* in a perfect Stature, to ſettle them in the terreſtrial Paradiſe, 'tis my Opinion, that he will alſo raiſe up all the faithful in a perfect Stature, to introduce them into the celeſtial Paradiſe. In this Life the Body of a Child is many Years before it can attain to the Stature of a perfect Man, but at the great Day of the Reſurrection, God will grant it to him in a Moment.

That which is ſpoken of in *Rev.* 20. is not contrary to this Doctrine; for when the holy Ghoſt ſaith, That *the Dead, ſmall and great ſhall ſtand before God*; that relates not to the Stature or Bigneſs of Body, but to the State and Condition of the Perſons, that is to ſay, the Kings and Princes ſhall appear to Judgment as well as the vileſt and moſt contemptible Subjects, and the moſt wretched Slaves; therefore theſe former Words are deſigned to expreſs nothing more than what St. *Paul* ſaith, *That we muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, that we might receive in our Bodies according as we have done, whether it be Good or Evil.*

Some are ready to ask what manner of Bodies ſhall the Reprobates have after the Reſurrection? I have no mind to ſpeak any Thing of my ſelf, otherwiſe I ſhould anſwer, that in Conſideration of the Fury of Hell-fire, the Smoak of the bottomleſs Pit, and the Violence of the exceſſive Torments which they ſhall ſuffer, they ſhall appear moſt deformed, ugly, ill-favoured, and dreadful to look upon. I ſhould ſay, that there ſhall appear in their guilty Looks and frighted Countenances, the Devil's Image, and that of the helliſh Furies.

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But it will be sufficient to reply, that the Bodies of the Wicked shall be immortal, and that their Immortality shall be most miserable. That it had been far better for them to have never been, or to have been as the Beasts, that die without any Hopes of Living again, for they shall live to die eternally, and they shall die, but never consume away. It shall not be possible to add any Thing to their most violent Tortures, for they shall be inexpressible; nor to the Continuance of their Sufferings, for they shall be eternal. Therefore, as we have already taken Notice, they shall seek Death, that is, they shall desire to be reduced to Nothing, but Death shall fly away from them, and give them over to a Worm that shall never die, and to a Fire that shall never be quenched. O miserable Bodies! O wretched Souls! whom God shall cast into the Midst of Hell's fiercest Flames, and against whom the Devils shall let fly all their Arrows, discharge all their Fury, and kindle all their Fires, and whom they will take Pleasure to torment for ever and ever.

9. Some inquire what Manner of Bodies the Children of God, and the Members of Christ shall have after they are risen from the Dead? I answer, that their Substance shall be the same which they had before Death; they shall not be imaginary or false Appearances, but true human Bodies made up of Flesh and Bones; for we may say of all the Bodies of the Faithful, as that of our Saviour Christ, that the Resurrection will procure to them a considerable Glory which they never had before, but it shall not destroy their Nature and Manhood. They shall be able to speak in the Language of our Redeemer, *Feel and see, a Spirit hath neither Flesh nor Bones, as ye see that I have.* As our Soul shall lose nothing of its Being, only it shall be perfectly cleansed from all Sin and Corruption, and sanctified in such a manner, that it will not be possible for it to entertain any vicious Inclination: Likewise there shall be no Alteration in the essential Part of our Bodies, but there shall be a wonderful Change

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in regard of the Qualities, for they shall cast off all Corruption and Mortality, and shall never be subject to Sickness, Pain, nor to the Inconveniencies, that disturb it during this Life. And if they have now any Imperfection, they shall be perfectly freed; so that we may justly say of the celestial *Jerusalem*, that in it no Blind nor Lame shall be suffer'd to enter, for all the Bodies of the Saints shall be so perfect and beautiful, that the least Spot or Blemish shall not be seen in them, 1 *Sam.* 6.

I know that Jesus Christ tells us in his Gospel, *Mat.* 5. *If thy right Eye offend thee pull it out, and cast it from thee, for 'tis better that one of thy Members perish, than that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell; and if thy Hand or thy Foot offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee, for 'tis better that thou shouldest enter into Life lame or maimed, than to have two Feet and two Hands, and to be cast into Eternal Fire*, Mark 4. But these Words are figurative; by them our Saviour would teach us, that for his Sake and Glory we must deny our dearest Affections, and our most importunate Lusts. And when these Words should be taken in their literal Sense, we must understand a Supposition, if it were possible to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven with one Eye, lame, or maimed; it would be far better to be admitted to that blessed State, than to have a perfect and a whole Body, and to be cast into the Torments of Hell. From thence we cannot infer, that the Faithful are to rise from their Graves with imperfect and deficient Bodies, for that is repugnant to an accomplished Happiness. Since Sin shall be utterly abolished and destroyed, the Punishment of Sin shall continue no longer.

There are nevertheless some who believe, with several ancient Doctors of the primitive Church, that the holy Martyrs shall bear about them the Scars and other Marks of their Sufferings, for the Name of Jesus, in the same Manner as this glorious Saviour, after his Resurrection could shew the Print of the Nails that

had fast'ned his Feet and Hands to the Cross, and in his Side the Hole that the Spear had made. They esteem such Marks glorious and honourable Scars; so that according to their Judgment, the Martyrs shall be like to the generous and noble-hearted Soldiers, who have received Wounds in the Service of their Prince, which they bear about as undoubted Expressions of their Courage. I shall not altogether contradict this Opinion, for 'tis not contrary to the Analogy of Faith: but I dare not affirm it as a certain Truth; for we cannot learn from the holy Scriptures, that represent these blessed Martyrs, cloathed with long Robes, washed and whitened in the Blood of the Lamb, without making any Mention of their former Sufferings. Our Saviour was pleased to preserve the Marks of his Sufferings, that he might convince St. *Thomas* of his Unbelief, and that he may one Day discover and shew them to those that have pierced him through. But from this Instance, I cannot see how we can conclude any Thing to the purpose. We may safely say, either that the Martyrs shall have no such Scars, or if they have, they shall bring no Deformity to their Bodies, nor shall they deprive us of any Member or Part required in us, to make us perfect. If it should be otherwise, we could not be entirely and perfectly happy. After the Resurrection, the Bodies of God's Children shall have none of these Imperfections that Sin hath brought into the World. They shall not feel any of the Infirmities, unto which the Bodies of *Adam* and *Eve* were subject in the State of Innocence, for their Life was sensual and animal-like, disturbed with Hunger, Thirst and Wearinefs, there they had Need of Nourishment and Drink, and especially of the Fruits of the Tree of Life, to supply so much of their natural Heat. I conceive also, that they stood in Want of Rest and Sleep; and altho' God would have protected them from all dangerous Accidents, if they had continued in their Integrity, if we consider them in themselves, without any such

Protection,

Protection, they might have been injured by Fire and Sword, and burned with the Heat of the ſcorching Sun. But it ſhall be otherwiſe with the Bodies of the Righteous, after the Reſurrection, they ſhall not be ſubject to any Infirmity, they ſhall be free from Pain, Wearineſs, and from the Senſe of Violence, as the holy Spirit promiſeth; they ſhall hunger and thirſt no more, the Sun ſhall not burn them, nor any Heat incommode them. 'Tis not to be doubted, but that a glorified Body ſhall enjoy all the Perfections that a human Body is capable of, and that the greateſt and rareſt Beauties on Earth, are but deformed Objects, in compariſon of the Celeſtial, which ſhall never change nor fade away, no Accident ſhall ever be able to deſtroy or diminiſh them. Years, Ages, and Thouſands of Ages, ſhall not imprint upon our glorious Faces the leaſt Wrinkle; we ſhall be always young and luſty, as a precious Stone that preſerves its Luſtre and Beauty, without Alteration, and as the Sun that never decreaſeth in Light and Heat. Thoſe glorified Bodies ſhall caſt off all groſs and heavy Qualities that encline them to the Earth, ſo that they ſhall be more nimble than the Eagles, and ſhall be able to fly up as quick as the Fire. St. *Paul* intends to teach us this Truth, when he tells us that this Body is ſown an earthly and a ſenſual Body; but it ſhall riſe again an heavenly and a ſpiritual Body. We are not ſo to underſtand theſe Words, as to think that God will change them into Spirits, or into ſuch uncompounded Bodies, as are the Heavens, for they ſhall yet be made up of Fleſh and Bones, and they ſhall have all the eſſential Parts of an human Body, as we have already taken Notice. But I conceive, that they are named ſpiritual and heavenly, becauſe they ſhall have no more the groſs and earthly Qualities, and they ſhall live no more a ſenſitive and an animal Life. In a Word, they ſhall need no more Meat nor Drink, than the Stars and celeſtial Bodies, no more than the holy Angels of God.

I confess that our Lord Jesus Christ ascended up into Heaven in a Cloud, not because a Cloud was necessary to support and keep up his glorious Body. For if in the State of his Infirmity and Humiliation, this divine Body was able to walk upon the Waves of the Sea, without sinking, by the Assistance of his divine Nature; how much more since his Glorification, shall it be able to ascend up on high, and to go whither he listeth? If the Help of any Creature had been necessary to support him, he might have had Legions of immortal Angels to carry him up; but Christ needed not to be assisted, neither by a Body, nor a Spirit, nor by any other Creature. This Cloud therefore that appeared at his Ascension, was no Token of the Infirmity of his humane Nature, it rather manifested the Glory and Magnificence of his divine Majesty, unto which this precious Body was united personally. God hath often revealed himself, attended by a Cloud, as upon Mount *Sinai*, in the Ark of the Covenant, at the Dedication of *Solomon*'s Temple. Therefore that Cloud in which God was pleased to discover himself, is stiled, *The Glory of God*, that is, the Sign and visible Expression of his glorious Presence, and divine Majesty. Let us therefore conclude from hence, that the Cloud which attended upon the glorified Body of Jesus Christ, was no Assistance to carry him up to Heaven, but as it were a Chariot of Triumph, to cause him to ascend with more Glory and Pomp. The Bodies of the Saints, after the Resurrection, shall shine and be full of Glory; they shall not only have some superficial Splendour upon their Countenance or Skin, as *Moses* when he had been with God forty Days and forty Nights in the holy Mountain, but they shall shine within and without as a true Diamond, that casts abroad on all sides its Light and Flames. So that it shall happen to them, as it happened to our Saviour upon Mount *Tabor*, for 'tis said that his Garments became white as the Light. In the same manner, at the Time of our Transfiguration, our Bodies

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that are but the Garments of our immortal Souls, ſhall be as clear as the Light, and as bright as the celeſtial Globes. I ſpeak here nothing, but what the Prophet *Daniel* ſaith before me, *Dan.* 12. *They that be wiſe, ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.* And our Saviour aſſures us, *Matth.* 23. *That the Children of God ſhall ſhine in the Kingdom of their Father, as the Sun.*

Theſe glorified Bodies ſhall never corrupt nor putrify, but they ſhall be for ever uncorruptible. Therefore St. *Paul* aſſures us, *That this corruptible muſt put on Incorruption.* So that I may ſafely affirm, that their Glory ſhall be more durable than that of the Sun, or of the Moon, or of the Stars. For tho' theſe celeſtial Bodies never corrupt, out of any inward Principle; though there can no Alteration happen to them, neither from their eſſential Form, nor from the Properties that iſſue from it, nor from any other inherent Quality, they ſhall nevertheleſs corrupt, out of an external Principle; for the almighty Hand of God which made them, ſhall change and alter them, as the Royal Prophet tells us, in *Pſal.* 102. *The Heavens ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure, yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a Garment, as a Veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed,* 1 Pet. 5. Unto this, St. *Peter* very well agrees, *The Heavens,* ſaith he, *ſhall paſs away with a great Noiſe.* Whereas the glorified Bodies ſhall never corrupt, neither by any internal Principle, nor by their eſſential Form, nor by the Properties and Accidents that flow from it, nor by any external Cauſe, nor by any Accident whatſoever, that can be imagined, for the almighty Hand of God ſhall make them, never to mar them again. From hence it follows, that they ſhall die no more, but ſhall continue immortal, for with Incorruption they muſt put on Immortality. Therefore when our Saviour ſpeaks of the State of the glorified Saints, *Luke* 20. he ſaith not only, that *they ſhall not die, but that they cannot die*

any more, because they shall be like the Angels, being the Children of the Resurrection. In this consists the Difference between them, and those whom God hath raised up, already mentioned in the *Old* and *New Testament*. For they were forced to return to their sensual Life, to eat and drink, and therefore they were again subject to Corruption and Death. But at the Day of the general Resurrection, *whatsoever is mortal, shall be swallow'd up by Life*; therefore St. *Paul* applies to this glorious Day, the Accomplishment of this Prophecy, *Death is swallow'd up in Victory.* And he brings in these Persons, who shall be cloathed with this immortal Glory, braving Death and the Grave, in this triumphing Language, *O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory!*

In short, to make us sensible, that our Bodies shall put on all the richest and most noble Qualities that can be imagined; and to express all in a Word, the holy Ghost assures us, that they shall bear the Image of the Son of God, and be made conformable to his glorious Body. St. *Paul* declares this Truth in the 15 Chap. of the first to the *Corinth.* *The First Man*, saith he, *was of the Earth earthy, the second Man was the Lord from Heaven; as is the Earthy, such are they that are earthy; and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; and as we have born the Image of the Earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly.* And in *Phil.* 3. he saith, *We wait for the Lord* Jesus *from Heaven, who shall change our vile Body, that it may be like to his glorious Body.* From hence you may understand, Christians, that at the Re-building of this little Temple of the Godhead, there shall happen no such Thing, as at the Rearing up of the Temple of *Jerusalem*; for when that was re-building, at the Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, they who had seen the former Temple and its wonderful Glory, wept aloud, and their weeping interrupted the others Expressions of Joy and Gladness. At the Restauration of the Temple of our Bodies, nothing will be heard but Songs of Triumph

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and Jubilee. Such as have ſeen, with the Eyes of Faith, Man's Body, as it was in the State of its Integrity, in the earthly Paradiſe, ſhall not be then ſorry that it hath been defaced by Sin and deſtroyed by Death. They ſhall not be ſorry for any Thing that is paſſed; they ſhall not be able to wiſh for any Increaſe of Happineſs and Glory for the future; for at the very Inſtant of its riſing from the Grave, it ſhall be raiſed to its higheſt Splendour, Happineſs, and Magnificence; ſo that it ſhall be truly ſaid, *That the Glory of this ſecond Houſe, ſhall be greater than that of the firſt*, Hag. 2.

Now that we have treated ſufficiently, of ſuch as ſhall riſe from their Graves, it remains that we take a View of them whoſe Bodies ſhall never be laid in the Duſt, and who ſhall be alive at Chriſt's Coming down from Heaven; for that purpoſe, St. *Paul* informs us, 1 Cor. 15. *Behold, I ſhew you a Myſtery, we ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall be all changed in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, at the Sound of the laſt Trumpet*; and he ſpeaks in this manner to the *Theſſalonians*, 1 Theſſ. 4. *For this we ſay unto you, by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the Coming of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep, for the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God, and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt; then we which are alive and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and we ſhall ever be with the Lord: wherefore comfort one another with theſe Words.* I know very well that St. *Paul* tells the *Hebrews, that 'tis appointed unto all Men once to die.* Therefore I conceive, that this great Change that ſhall be made in the Bodies of them that ſhall be then alive, ſhall be a Kind of Death; for Chriſt will deſtroy and aboliſh altogether in them, all Corruption and Inclination to Mortality. And when he ſhall change the Bodies of the Reprobates, he will make them like to the other Reprobates, whom he ſhall fetch out of their Graves. He will make them immortal, that they

may be eternally tormented in Hell. But he will cause the Bodies of Believers then alive, to be like the other Believers, that they may all partake and enjoy the same Glory and eternal Bliss.

Christians, in what Condition soever you be in, seriously apply to your selves these divine Consolations. You that are grieved to see your Bodies maimed and deprived of one of your Members, of your Eyes, Hearing, or of some other of your Senses, whether you be so born, or whether such a Privation hath happen'd to you by a Disease, by a Mis-chance, or by any other Accident, rejoice and comfort your selves with this Assurance, that you shall see one Day this wretched Body restored to a perfect State, to a Perfection that shall never be lost. You who fret and vex your selves, to behold how old Age and Sickness have disfigured your Bodies, what Breaches and Ruins they have caused in you, comfort your selves in Expectation of this glorious Resurrection, which shall supply this decay'd and languishing Body with new Strength and Vigour, and adorn it with a perfect Beauty, and an eternal Glory.

And you whom Death undermines, and intends shortly to lay in the Dust, grieve not at it, for what you lose at present, you shall find again at the great Day of the Resurrection. When *Joseph* died, he commanded his Brethren, concerning his Bones, that they should carry them out of *Egypt* into the Land of *Canaan*. Now our Bones are the Bones of Jesus Christ, our true *Joseph*. Therefore he will command his Angels to gather them up safe, he himself will have a Care to preserve them; at the great Morn of the Resurrection, he shall fetch them out of their Graves, as out of an *Egypt*, out of an House of Bondage, and will carry them to his celestial *Canaan*. When the Tabernacle was taken in Pieces, the High-Priest delivered every Piece in charge to the Levites, so that when they were to set it up again, there was nothing wanting. Likewise our Saviour hath given in charge,

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and delivered by Retail, to our Tombs, every Member and Part of our Bodies, theſe Tabernacles, which he hath ſanctified for himſelf. Therefore they ſhall all be found again at the Reſurrection, without the leaſt Diminution. Theſe Tabernacles ſhall not only be found entire, but they ſhall be beautified with a far greater Glory and Splendour than before.

There is none but would be glad to lay himſelf down to ſleep in his Bed, and pull off his Garments willingly, if he were certain to be more healthy, and to find his Garments freſher and more beautiful in the Morning. If he were perſwaded, that inſtead of old Rags, he were to put on a royal Attire, and moſt magnificent Garments. Who would not willingly go out of a pitiful Cabin, and forſake a miſerable Lodge, which ſhall be one Day changed into a golden Palace, adorn'd with precious Stones? Comfort thy ſelf, believing Soul, and rejoice in God thy Redeemer, caſt off willingly this Garment that is ſo incommodious and troubleſome to thee. Forſake this wretched Body, undermin'd by Sickneſs and Diſeaſes, and conſum'd by Time. Sleep quietly in the Lord Jeſus, and repoſe thy ſelf in his Boſom, for when thou ſhalt wake again at the Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet, thou ſhalt find this Garment whiter than Snow, and as bright as the Light. Grieve not to ſee this miſerable Dwelling fall to Pieces and rot, for God ſhall build it up again with his own Hands, and convert it into his Temple, and a Pavilion of his Glory. Thou may'ſt be certain, ſhortly to return again, and to find this woful Lodge of Earth, become an heavenly Palace, purer than fine Gold, and brighter than Diamonds, Rubies, and all precious Stones. Weep not for thy beautiful Eyes that are ſhut, nor for the Reſt of thy Senſes, that are loſt, or for the Members of thy Body, that conſume away one after another. For with theſe ſame Eyes that have loſt, or ſhall ſhortly loſe the Sight of the Day, thou ſhalt behold a divine Light that ſhall ſhine eternally

in Heaven; thou shalt behold the Face of the King of Kings, and all the Glory and Magnificence of his Kingdom. With these Ears, that are almost deaf, and that shall shortly be stopp'd, thou shalt hear with Transports of Joy, the ravishing Harmonies of the Saints, and the Songs of the blessed Angels. With this stammering Tongue, which is to lose the Faculty of Speech, thou shalt sing with a loud Voice the Praises of Almighty God, in the glorious Company of the Church Triumphing. With these unsteady Hands, that can scarce hold any Thing, thou shalt one Day receive immortal Palms, and golden Viols, which thou shalt never quit. With these Feet that are dying, and that can scarce support thee, thou shalt follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and thou shalt walk about the Streets of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*. And this same Body that is going to rot, and to be turned to Dust, shall one Day shine as the Firmament, and as the Sun in its greatest Splendour.

What desirest thou more, Christian Soul, for thy Comfort? What Addition can there be made to thine Happiness? Since thou art going to the Fruition of eternal Joys and of endless Pleasures in Heaven. In the mean while, the Body shall endure no Pain nor Grief; and God will shortly raise it up again from this deep Sleep, that begins to dull thy Senses and close thine Eye-Lids. Shortly God will publish the Year of the great Jubilee, all the Prisons of Death shall be then opened, and the Prisoners shall be set at Liberty. Thou shalt shortly hear the Sound of the last Trumpet, that shall rouse thee out of the Dust, and cause thee to appear in the Presence of thy great Redeemer. Thou leavest a wretched Body, full of Darkness and Corruption, assaulted by Death on all Sides, but shall shortly be made incorruptible, immortal and adorned with Light and Glory.

Let therefore thy Heart rejoice, thy Tongue be glad, and thy Flesh rest in Hope, for the Lord will not leave thee always in the Grave, he will not suffer

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thee to continue for ever in Duſt and Corruption; he will not only diſcover to thee the Ways of Life, but he will ſhortly come down himſelf from Heaven to tranſport thee thither.

When Death ſhall be upon thy Lips, when it ſhall be ready to lay thee in thy Grave, let not this diſturb the Quiet of thy Soul, nor the Peace of thy Conſcience, let it not ſhake thy precious Faith that keeps thee up, nor drive thee from the Anchor of thy bleſſed Hope fixed in Heaven, where Jeſus Chriſt is enter'd as thy Forerunner. In ſhort, when thy Body ſhall be all covered with Sores and Boils, as that of *Job*, *Job* 19. when it ſhall all fall to Pieces before thine Eyes, let nothing hinder thee from crying out with this patient Man, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God, whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another.* And with St. *Paul*, Phil. 3. *We look from Heaven for the Saviour the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall change our vile Body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the mighty Working, whereby he is able even to ſubdue all Things unto himſelf.*

A Prayer and Meditation of a Chriſtian, who being ready to depart out of the World, comforts himſelf with an Aſſurance and Expectation of the glorious Reſurrection of his Body from the Duſt.

O *Eternal and divine Word! by whom all Things were created, and without whom was not any Thing made that was made; Thou haſt not only formed our Souls, and faſhioned our Bodies with thy skilful Hands, but when they were miſerably loſt and corrupted with Sin, thou haſt been pleaſed to redeem both our Souls and Bodies with thy moſt*

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precious Blood, and to renew thy glorious Image in us. This wretched Body is but an earthen Vessel; yet thou hast inclosed in it, the richest Treasures of Life and Light. Thou hast appointed it to be the Temple of the Holy Ghost, and a noble Pavilion of the Godhead, to participate with the Soul in the eternal Happiness, of thy Kingdom. I feel my Strength failing me, and this earthly Tabernacle decaying every Day, and every Hour, so that I am certain that it shall be reduced to Dust. But Lord I am sufficiently comforted with the Knowledge, that if the outward Man decays, the inward is renewed Day by Day; If this wretched Body falls down by Death, thou wilt raise it up again at the general Resurrection, My Lord, and my God, that art sufficiently able; for all Power is given to thee in Heaven and in Earth, and the Depths of the Sea. As the Father raiseth and quickneth the Dead, thou doest also quicken them whom thou hast chosen. Thou hast fashioned my Body of Dust, and created this Dust of nothing, and shalt not thou be able of the same Dust, into which this my Body shall be turned by Death, to make and fashion it again? Thou hast by thine Almighty Power, created my Soul, and infused it into this Body, and canst thou not command it back again when it shall please thee, to live for ever in a more blessed Society than before? O Prince of Life, Death hath sufficiently felt in thy Person thine infinite Power. Its Purpose was to devour thee, but thou hast overcome it in a glorious manner. Thou hast yielded to die, but art return'd to live for ever and ever, and hast in thy Custody the Keys of Hell and of Death, to open and shut, to kill and make alive at thy Pleasure. Lord Jesus! the Resurrection and the Life, I know thou art both willing and able to deliver this Body out of the Power of Death, and awake my sleeping Dust with the Sound of the Arch-Angel's Trumpet, as thou hast promised. I expect to see that glorious Day of thy Triumph, when accompanied by all the mighty Angels of Heaven. Thou wilt set at Liberty all the Prisoners of Death, and restore to us again all the Blessings, forfeited by Sin. The Sea and the Earth shall surrender unto thee the Bodies they have in their Custody, and obey thy Commands,

O Omnipotent Word! that made the Heavens and the Earth! thou ſhalt be heard, and operate effectually in our Graves, that we may march out, and ſtand before the dreadful Tribunal. We ſhall then appear, not wrapt in our winding Sheets as Lazarus, *nor with any Relicks of Infirmity, but with Bodies more beautiful, perfect, and glorious than formerly. So that we may have good Cauſe to admire the Glory of that ſecond Building, which by thine Almighty Power thou wilt rear out of the Duſt, and which will be far greater than the preſent. For this infirm Body ſhall be made conformable to thy celeſtial Body. This corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption, and this Mortality ſhall be ſwallowed by Immortality, and an Eternal Life. I am therefore fully perſwaded, my glorious Redeemer! that with theſe languiſhing Eyes I ſhall behold thy magnificent Coming in a Cloud, ſurrounded with Flames of Fire, and ſitting on a Throne. With theſe Ears I ſhall hear the terrible and loud Voice of the Arch-Angel's Trumpet, and the Songs of the bleſſed Companies of Heaven. With this Tongue I hope to tune forth thy Divine Praiſes; with theſe dying Hands to embrace thee my bleſſed Saviour; and with theſe Trembling Feet already in the Grave, I ſhall follow thee into the Heavenly* Jeruſalem; *and this ſame Body, condemn'd to rot in a Tomb, ſhall one Day ſhine in thy Heavenly Kingdom. I am ready, Lord, to depart hence, my Breath fails me, and Death appears before me, threatning to ſtrike the laſt Stroke; but notwithſtanding all Difficulties and Objections, I know I ſhall riſe again to behold thy Magnificence and Glory.* Amen.

CHAP. XXIII.

The Twelfth Conſolation; The Deſtruction of Death, and the eternal and moſt bleſſed Life which we ſhall enjoy both in Soul and Body after our Reſurrection.

WE have ſufficiently treated of that Happineſs which is prepar'd for our Souls at their Departure from the Bodies, and of the glorious Reſurrection

rection promised to these Bodies, when Jesus Christ shall come down from Heaven in his Glory to judge the quick and the dead. It seems that we have nothing more to say, but as *Moses* when he had made the Ark of *Shittim* Wood, and lined it with fine Gold, he put round about a Crown of Gold upon the Top. In the same Manner now that we have declared to you the Incorruption and future Glory of our Bodies, which are to be looked upon as a sacred Ark, where God's Majesty shall dwell for ever. Now that we have shewn how, by the almighty and gracious Power of God, they shall become more incorruptible than the *Shittim* Wood, and more glorious than fine Gold: I will now with God's Assistance draw about them a Crown more precious than the purest Gold, and richer than all the Jewels in the World. I mean, to crown this Work, and intend to end it with as perfect a Picture, as I am able to draw, of the eternal Glory and Happiness which we expect to enjoy, both in Soul and Body, after our Resurrection. But first, I may say something of the entire and perfect Destruction of all our Enemies, and represent to you the Overthrow, and the final Conquest over Death.

When Jesus Christ shall appear again to judge the World in Righteousness, he shall sit upon a glorious and most splendid Throne. *Solomon*'s magnificent Throne was but its Shadow and imperfect Type: He shall then send forth his Angels who shall gather together the Elect, with the sound of a trumpet from the four parts of the world, and from one End of the Heavens to the other. The Sight of this glorious Saviour, shall then fill us with an unspeakable Joy, and cause us to burst forth into this language, *Isa.* 25. *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; This is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his Salvation.* But when all the Kindreds of the Earth shall behold this magnificent King, in the Clouds of Heaven, with Power and great Glory, they shall lament and strike their Breasts in Despair, they shall call to the Mountains and Rocks, *Rev.* 6. *Fall*

8. *Fall upon us and hide us from the Face of him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb; for the great Day of his Wrath is come, who ſhall be able to ſtand?*

Then the Lord ſhall bring to Light the hidden Things of Darkneſs, and ſhall manifeſt the Thoughts of the Heart, with the moſt ſecret Contrivances. The Books ſhall be opened, not only of the guilty Conſciences, where Satan's Image and Deeds ſhall be engraven, but alſo the other Books, where God himſelf hath written, with his own Finger, all our Actions, Words, and our moſt hidden Thoughts. All Men ſhall be judged according to the Things written in the Books. St. *John* declares this in the 20th of the *Revelations*; *I ſaw a great white Throne, and him that ſate on it, from whoſe Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was no Place for them. And I ſaw the Dead ſmall and great ſtand before God, and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life, and the Dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the Books, according to their Works.* Unto this St. *Paul* agrees, *We muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive in his Body according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil.*

There are three Sorts of Perſons who are to ſtand before this glorious Tribunal: Such as never had any other Tutor but Nature, who were not acquainted with any other Works of God, but of Creation and Providence. For God hath not left himſelf without Witneſs in doing Good. The ſecond Sort have been aſſiſted with a divine Revelation from above, under the Law, which hath diſtinctly taught them what Works are pleaſing to God. Theſe may have heard ſomething of a *Meſſias* from the ancient Prophets, they may have ſeen his Portraiture in the Types and Shadows of *Moſes*'s Ordinances. The other Sort have had the Grace of God clearly and plainly revealed to them, to whom our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath brought Life and Immortality to Light, through the Goſpel. There are none of theſe Perſons, if they have lived in Impiety and Debauchery,

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and are dead in Impenitency, that shall be able to excuse themselves in this dreadful Day of Judgment. But some are more guilty than others, therefore they shall be condemned to greater Punishments.

The Knowledge that God hath bestowed upon Man, hath been obscur'd by the Prince of Darkness, but it hath not been totally extinct; and that Law which God hath engraven in the Soul of Man, hath not been altogether blotted out, but there remains yet some Relicks. So that no Man living can affirm, that he hath done all the good Deeds which his Conscience was perswaded that he ought to perform, and that he hath omitted all the evil Acts of which his Conscience convinc'd him. They who have lived and are dead without any Law of God revealed to them, shall be judged without the Law. Such shall be condemned for having taken Pleasure in extinguishing the remains of their natural Light, and in smothering the good and rational Dictates of their Consciences. They shall be condemned because they have abused Heaven's Favours, and filled themselves with God's good Creatures, without returning to him due Thanks; and because they have not meditated as they ought, upon so many stately and noble Works of Nature, nor learned by that Means to know God, who hath left in these Works, so many Impressions of his eternal Power and Godhead, and because that knowing God, they have not glorified him as God: This St. *Paul* teacheth in these Words, *As many as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law; and as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law. For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves, which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another in the Day when God shall judge the secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel*, Rom. 2.

They that profess to know the Law, shall be judged by the Law; such as have already heard the Thunders

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of Mount *Sinai*, they ſhall one Day feel the Thunder-bolts. They ſhall underſtand by Experience, what it is to rebel againſt God, and to draw upon themſelves and their guilty Heads, the dreadful Curſes of God's Law, *Deut.* 17. *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them*, Gal. 2. There is no Doubt but that the *Jews*, upon whom *Moſes* and the Prophets have ſpent ſo many fruitleſs Exhortations to live well, ſhall be puniſhed with ſharper Torments than the poor Savages, to whom God never ſent any Meſſage, who never had any Acquaintance with the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*, being Strangers from the Covenant, having no Hope, and being without God in the World, *Eph.* 2. For that Servant who knoweth his Maſter's Will and doth it not, ſhall be beaten with more Stripes than him that knoweth it not, *Luke* 12.

But no People upon Earth have Cauſe to expect and dread a more ſevere Sentence than wicked Chriſtians, who make Profeſſion of knowing God, and believing in Jeſus Chriſt, who nevertheleſs deny him by their Works, and trample under Feet the Riches of his Grace. How can it otherwiſe be, for ſuch as have heard the Goſpel preached, who have ſeen Jeſus Chriſt as it were crucified before their Eyes, and yet have made no Advantage of all this, they ought to be puniſhed in another Manner than the bare Auditors of *Moſes*, that never ſaw the *Meſſias* but afar off, and in the Shadows of the ceremonial Law. Take Notice of theſe divine Expreſſions of St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews*; *He that deſpiſed Moſes's Law died without Mercy, under two or three Witneſſes; of how much ſorer Puniſhment, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under Foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy Thing, and hath done Deſpite unto the Spirit of Grace? For we know him that hath ſaid, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompence, ſaith the Lord; and again, the Lord ſhall judge his People. It is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.* Therefore when St. *Paul*

ſpeaks of ſuch as obey not the Goſpel, he ſaith, *That they ſhall be puniſhed with eternal Puniſhments from the Preſence of God, and from the Glory of his Power.* And our Saviour teacheth us, that ſuch as reject ſo great Salvation, ſhall be puniſhed more grievouſly than the moſt abominable Sinners, unto whom it was never reveal'd. Therefore when he ſends forth his Apoſtles to preach, he tells them; *Whoſoever ſhall not receive you, and hear your Words, when ye depart out of that Houſe or City, ſhake off the Duſt of your Feet; verily I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for the Land of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *in the Day of Judgment, than for that City.* Likewiſe when he reproaches the Incredulity and Impenitency of the Cities that were not converted by the Preaching of his Goſpel, and the Glory of his Miracles, he tells them, *Matth.* 11. *Wo unto thee* Chorazin, *wo unto thee* Bethſaida, *for if the mighty Works which have been done in you, had been done in* Tyre *and* Sidon, *they would have repented long ago in Sack-cloth and Aſhes. But I ſay unto you it ſhall be more tolerable for* Tyre *and* Sidon *at the Day of Judgment, than for you. And thou* Capernaum, *which are exalted unto Heaven, ſhalt be brought down to Hell. For if the mighty Works which have been done in thee, had been done in* Sodom, *it would have remained unto this Day: But I ſay unto you, that it ſhall be more tolerable for the Land of* Sodom *in the Day of Judgment than for thee.*

The great Judge of the World, ſhall place at his Left-hand all wicked Souls, which have lived without any Fear of God, and without expreſſing Charity to the Members of his myſtical Body, and ſhall pronounce to them this dreadful Sentence; *Depart from me ye Curſed, to Eternal Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; for I was an hungry, and ye gave me no Meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye cloathed me not; ſick, and in Priſon, and ye viſited me not; verily I ſay unto you, in as much as ye aid it not to one of the leaſt of theſe, ye did it not to me.* But the Faithful, who have witneſſed their Faith by a good and holy Life; and

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by Works of Charity and Mercy, he will place at his Right-hand, and in the Preſence of God and all his Holy Angels, he ſhall ſay unto them; *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Beginning of the World; for I was hungry, and ye gave me Meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye cloathed me; I was ſick, and ye viſited me; I was in Priſon, and ye came unto me; verily I ſay unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

There be ſome that make this Queſtion, what Sign ſhall precede immediately, or accompany the Coming of Chriſt in the World? Our Saviour hath given Occaſion to this Demand; for when he ſpeaks of the Things that are to happen about the Time of his glorious Appearance, he ſaith, *That the Sun ſhall be darkned, the Moon ſhall not give Light, the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heavens ſhall be ſhaken, and then ſhall appear in Heaven the Sign of the Son of Man.*

Some imagine, That this Sign of the Son of Man, is the Sign of the Croſs, which will be viſible in the Air. This Opinion in it ſelf is harmleſs, but in Regard that it hath no Foundation in holy Scripture, I am not to inſiſt upon it. Others believe, that it ſhall be the Fire with which Jeſus Chriſt ſhall burn the Earth, diſſolve the Elements, and puniſh Unbelievers. This Conceit is grounded upon St. *Paul*'s Words to the *Theſſ.* 2 *Theſ.* 1. *It is a righteous Thing with God to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, Reſt with us, when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Others conceive, that this Sign of the Son of Man, is nothing elſe but the Body of Jeſus Chriſt, bearing and diſcovering the Print of the Nails in his Hands and Feet, and the Wound of the Spear in his Side. This they

gather from these Words of the first of the *Revel. Behold he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.* There be others yet, that take it in another Sense, and believe that there shall be no particular Sign, but that we must understand by this Sign of the Son of Man, all those Things which shall declare the End of the World, and the Coming of Jesus Christ to judge the Quick and the Dead. If we take the Words in this Sense, there will be an excellent Allusion to that which is commonly practis'd, when Kings and Princes make their publick Entry into great Cities; for their Coming in is proclaim'd by the Sound of a Trumpet, and by the Attendants of Majesty, a Train and Pomp that usually accompanies it. In the same manner, the glorious Coming of Jesus Christ, shall be known by the Sound of the Arch-Angel's Trumpet, and by all the Signs and wonderful Alterations which shall suddenly happen in the Heavens. This last Opinion is very likely, and the former is not contrary to the Analogy of Faith.

Therefore, in Matters indifferent, not plainly decided by the Word of God, we leave to every pious Soul a Liberty to chuse that which it likes best.

Some enquire further, if the Souls of the Damned go down into Hell immediately after their Egress out of the Body, and are tormented in an unquenchable Fire, whereof the Heat never lessens, as the Christian Religion teacheth, and as we may understand by the Parable of the rich Glutton; doth it not follow, that these Wretches are already judg'd? How is it then that the Son of God will judge them again at the last Day, and send them to an everlasting Burning prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels, I answer, first, That 'tis no Absurdity to say, that one Sentence shall be pronounc'd twice, for Men are wont to read the Sentence of Doom to the Prisoner, before he is taken out of Prison; afterwards the same Sentence is publish'd in the Audience of the People, at the Time of Execution. Likewise, when the Souls of the wicked depart

depart out of their wretched Bodies, God pronounces to them the Sentence of Death; but when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall ſit upon the Throne of his Glory, he ſhall publiſh the ſame Sentence before all the Men of the World, and all the Angels of Heaven. Beſides, that Sentence was never declar'd but to the Soul, but then it ſhall be declar'd to both Soul and Body, and both together ſhall be ſent to the Everlaſting Burning, from whence they never ſhall be releas'd. From hence therefore, Chriſtians, you may underſtand, that there are Three Degrees of Puniſhments or Torments to the Wicked; for in this Life they have a Worm that gnaws their Bowels and Heart, and a Kind of Hell, that torments their Conſciences. At the Going of their Souls out of the World, they are caſt headlong into the eternal Flames of Hell, where they ſuffer unſpeakable Torments. At that time their Bodies are ſenſeleſs in their Graves, as the Bodies of the Righteous. But at this laſt and dreadful Day of Judgment, as the Grave ſhall reſtore all the dead Bodies; Hell, which is the Place deſigned for the Torment of the Damned, ſhall give up all the Souls that are tormented in its Flames, and theſe curſed Souls ſhall be ſent back to their miſerable Bodies, to ſuffer the Pangs of an eternal Death, *Rev.* 20. Thus they ſhall be caſt ni Body and Soul into the bottomleſs Pit, where there is Weeping and Gnaſhing of Teeth. At that Time the Beaſt, the falſe Prophet, and all the Enemies of God and of his Church, ſhall be caſt alive into the Lake burning with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death, *Rev.* 19. 10, 11. And when all theſe Offenders ſhall be executed, the Executioners themſelves ſhall be puniſhed for their Crimes; when the Damned ſhall be caſt into eternal Tortures, the Devils and infernal Furies ſhall be ſent after them; as 'tis ſaid, *The Devil who ſeduced the Nations, ſhall be caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, where the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet are, and they ſhall be tormented Day and Night for ever and ever*, Revel. 20. What a dreadful Sight will it be to look upon all thoſe roaring Lions,

thoſe furious Dragons in their Rage, vomiting forth Fire and Flames! What a joyful Spectacle ſhall this be to the Children of God, to look upon theſe infernal Devils, bound faſt with thoſe Chains which they ſhall never be able to break, and ſhut up in the bottomleſs Pit, out of which they ſhall never be releaſed!

Our Lord ſhall caſt into this Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, and ſhut up in this bottomleſs Pit, not only the Devil and his Angels, the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet, and generally all wicked Souls and Unbelievers, but he ſhall caſt therein alſo Death and the Grave, or rather, he ſhall aboliſh them for ever. As *Joſhua*, when he conquered the Kings of the *Amorites*, put them not to Death until he had overcome all his Enemies; Likewiſe, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, our true *Joſhua*, hath encountred with Death upon the Croſs, and overcome it by his Reſurrection; but he will not deſtroy it altogether until the laſt Day, when he ſhall come to judge the World. Then to perfect all his glorious Victories, he ſhall deſtroy this laſt Enemy, this Deſtroyer of his Brethren, and of his Members; ſo that *Death ſhall be no more*. It ſhall be no more for the Wicked, they ſhall ſeek it in vain to be freed from their Torments. It ſhall fly away from them as a Shadow that departs, and is no more to be found. Death ſhall be no more for God's Children, for it ſhall never diſturb their Reſt and Happineſs.

If the old Serpent could enter into Paradiſe, we ſhould fear his Temptations and enflamed Darts; and if Death continued in its Empire, we ſhould dread its Approaches; but then it ſhall not have the leaſt Power, it ſhall be totally aboliſhed; all the Living ſhall become immortal. And altho' God will not deſtroy the Being, nor take away the Malice of the Devil, yet to us he ſhall be as if he were not, for he ſhall never be able to break his Chains, nor to eſcape out of his Priſon; and between him and us there ſhall be Depths that can never be filled. So that as *Moſes*, when he caſt his Eyes upon *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, who purſued

ſued the frighted *Iſraelites*, he told them, *Stand ſtill and ſee the Salvation of the Lord, which he will ſhew to you to Day. For the Egyptians whom ye have ſeen to Day, ye ſhall ſee them again no more for ever.* Likewiſe, when we think upon Satan, and all his infernal Armies that purſue you, we may ſay with Confidence, ſettle your Minds, Chriſtian Souls, and with the Eye of Faith behold the Salvation of the Lord; for theſe helliſh Furies that have perſecuted us ſo long, ſhall be reduced to that Condition, that they ſhall not be able to do you the leaſt Diſpleaſure, or to give you any Apprehenſion. God is going to drown them in the Red-Sea of his Wrath, and to ſhut them up for ever in the bottomleſs Pit of his juſt Revenge. So that, as in the heavenly Paradiſe, there ſhall be neither Pain nor Sorrow, nor Grief nor Crying, nor Sighs heard; likewiſe there ſhall never be any Fear nor Fright, nor the leaſt Alarm, but we ſhall live there in a ſettled Peace and Quiet for ever.

'Tis reported of the *Macedonians*, that they wept for Joy when they beheld their King *Alexander the Great*, ſeated in the Throne of *Darius*, and trampling under Feet the Pride and Empire of *Perſia*. But how exceeding great ſhall our Joy be, when we ſhall behold Jeſus Chriſt our great Monarch, ſitting upon the Throne of God, and trampling under Feet the Pomp of the World, cruſhing the red Dragon, and all the tyrannical Powers of Hell? The Glory of *Alexander* vaniſhed away with his Breath. Death deſtroyed all his Trophies; but our Lord ſhall triumph over Death it ſelf; it ſhall be the laſt Act of his eternal Juſtice, to deſtroy the great Murderer from the Beginning.

At that Time there ſhall be no more Enemies to encounter with, no Evils to be feared, neither ſhall there be any Advantages to be deſired, nor Honours to be expected; for God will admit us to the bottomleſs Ocean of the moſt divine Pleaſures, and raiſe us up to the higheſt Glory that our Nature ſhall be capable of. This Happineſs and this Glory ſhall be infinite in re-

gard of its Durance. It shall not be like to the Pomp and Magnificence of the Kings and Princes of the World, which vanisheth away in an Instant; nor like to the Brightness of *Moses*'s Face, which departed with his Life; nor like the Transfiguration of Christ upon Mount *Tabor*, which soon disappeared. For when it shall have continued as many hundred Ages as there are Stars in the Firmament, it shall then but begin and appear in its Rising, so that there we may have just Cause, and more Reason than St. *Peter*, to say, *Lord, it is good for us to be here.* There is no Place in the World so pleasant and delightful, but at last one shall be weary to continue in it; nor Company so amiable and sweet, but becomes tedious in Time; nor Pleasure so ravishing, but gives a Distaste. The greatest Persons on Earth sigh under the Burden of their Greatness; the Brightness of their Glory dazles them. When nothing troubles them, they are troubled of their own accord, and their most magnificent Triumphs disturb and weary them. Oft-times their Heart groans in the Midst of the greatest Acclamations and publick Applause; they think themselves more unhappy than those who envy their apparent Happiness. For all that shines is not Gold; the most beautiful Roses are not without their Prickles, and many Times they hide dangerous Serpents.

As the Glory and Happiness of Paradise is infinite, in Regard of its Durance, so in Respect of its Dignity and Excellency. For God will not only satisfy all our Desires, and answer all our Expectations, but he will also give to us above all that we can ask or think.

Shall I undertake to paint out unto you this Glory and perfect Happiness? When St. *Paul* speaks of these evangelical Mysteries, he assures us, that they are Things that the Eye of Man hath never seen, that his Ear hath never heard, and that never enter'd into his Heart, 1 *Cor.* 2. If this hath been spoken of the Doctrine that reveals this Glory and eternal Happiness;

how

how are we able to comprehend the glory and happineſs it ſelf? Therefore the ſame Apoſtle tells us in another Place, *That God worketh in us abundantly, above that we are able to ask or think*, Epheſ. 3. I cannot boaſt of having ſpoken with God Face to Face, as *Moſes*, *Numb.* 11. of having been raviſhed, as St. *Paul*, into the third Heaven, 1 *Cor.* 12. God hath not carried me up as St. *John*, into the celeſtial *Jeruſalem*; neither hath he deliver'd to me, as to his holy Angels, a Reed to meaſure the holy City. But when I ſhould have enjoyed theſe glorious Privileges, this Divine Entertainment, theſe ſupernatural Elevations, when I ſhould have walked about, and taken a full View of the celeſtial *Jeruſalem*, when I ſhould have been in the Company of the Seraphims that fly about God's Throne, when I ſhould have beheld God Face to Face, altho' I were the moſt eloquent of all Men, and ſpoke with the Tongues of Angels, and had in my Hand the Pencil of an Arch-Angel, I ſhould not dare to undertake to repreſent this exceeding great Glory, nor to paint out to you the Brightneſs of that heavenly Light, whereof the leaſt Beam is able to dazle me. St. *Paul* had been near the Body of this great Light, he had beheld the Riches and Glory of Paradiſe, yet he confeſſeth that they be Things not to be expreſſed by any Tongue.

But as thoſe who cannot caſt their Eyes directly to look upon the Sun, becauſe it blinds them with its exceeding great Light, behold its Body with more Eaſe and Leiſure in the Water, or in a Looking-Glaſs: Thus ſhall we conſider and look upon the Images which God himſelf hath expreſſed for us in his Holy Word, of this divine Brightneſs of Heaven, which we are not able otherwiſe to comprehend. For God hath dealt with us as a Father doth with his young Babes, who babbles with them, and repreſents to them the Light of the Sun, with a black Coal. Or as the Aſtrologers, who repreſent the heavenly Conſtellations by the Figures of Birds, or four-footed Beaſts, and of creeping Things.

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For nothing can enter into our Understanding but by the Door of our Senses, therefore spiritual and celestial Things, are represented under the Notion of corporal and earthly Enjoyments, which we passionately love. And because there is not one Thing here below that can express to us the Glory and Happiness of Paradise; so many Perfections are not to be found in any one Enjoyment: Therefore the holy Ghost gathers together all the Excellencies, Riches, and Beauty, scattered about in the inferiour Creatures, and borrows the Ideas and Notions of those Things that are rarest and most glorious, and that give us the greatest Pleasure and Satisfaction, to represent to us Heaven's Glory.

To begin in the first Place with the Word *Paradise*; it signifies a delightful and a pleasant Garden; 'tis often made use of to express to us the Joys and Happiness of the Life to come, and to make us sensible, that what we have lost by *Adam*, is restored to us by *Jesus Christ*. Our Lord and Saviour, who is Goodness it self, shall bestow upon us another *Eden*, another Garden of Pleasure, watered with living Water. In the Midst of it is the Tree of Life, that brings forth its Fruits every Month. Instead of an earthly Paradise subject to change, we shall find an heavenly and an unchangeable Paradise. The earthly Paradise is no more to be seen; 'tis thought that it was swallow'd up and destroyed by the Waters of the Deluge; but the heavenly Paradise can never be destroyed by the fiercest Fire, nor by the most swelling Waves. 'Tis above all the Winds, Storms, and Tempests; therefore St. *Peter* assures us, *That 'tis an incorruptible Inheritance, that fadeth not away.* It hath no need of an elemental Water, for 'tis watered every where with the River of living Water, that proceeds from the Throne of God and the Lamb. And whereas Cherubims armed with a Flaming-Sword, stood at the Entrance of the earthly Paradise, to hinder *Adam* from approaching near to the Tree of Life, and from gathering of its Fruits;

now

now whole Legions of Cherubims are to carry us up upon their Wings to the true Tree of Life, which ſtands in the Midſt of the heavenly Paradiſe; and Jeſus Chriſt himſelf the Prince of all the Angels, of all the Cherubims and Seraphims, promiſeth to admit us to partake of its delicious Fruits, by theſe bleſſed Words, *To him that ſhall overcome, I will give him to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the Midſt of the Paradiſe of God.*

'Tis the common Cuſtom of Men to have an high Eſteem of beautiful and great Cities, whereof the Buildings are ſtately, and the Inhabitants numerous. Therefore the *Jews* were wont to boaſt of *Jeruſalem*, and to call it, *The City perfect in Beauty, the Joy of the whole Earth.* Therefore the holy Ghoſt repreſents to us the Glory and Happineſs of Heaven, by a City which he names *Jeruſalem.* And St. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, makes the ſame Alluſion. For when he had ſaid, *That* Abraham *by Faith ſojourned in the Land of Promiſe, as in a ſtrange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with* Iſaac *and* Jacob, *the Heirs with him of the ſame Promiſe*; he adds immediately after, *For he looked for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God*; and a little after, *God is not aſhamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a City*, Heb. 11. And in the 12th Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle, he ſpeaks to Believers in this manner; *Ye are come to Mount* Sion, *and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels.* And elſewhere, *We have no continuing City here below, but we ſeek one to come*, Heb. 13. 14.

God is pleaſed, not only to deſcribe to us our future Paradiſe under the general Notion of a City, and of *Jeruſalem*, but he diſcovers to us its heavenly Beauty, its Glory and Magnificence. You cannot find a richer and more excellent Image that than of St. *John*, who himſelf had been a Spectator of the new *Jeruſalem*, and had beheld all its Rarities and Wonders. For when the Angel who had in his Hand a golden Reed,

Reed, to measure this glorious City, had said unto him, *Come, I will shew thee the Spouse, the Wife of the Lamb.* He carried him in the Spirit to an high Mountain, from whence he had a Prospect of this great and holy City *Jerusalem*, which came down from Heaven from God, decked as a Spouse prepared for her Husband, having the Glory of God and his Light. This faithful Witness assures us, that its Buildings, and the Streets of this blessed City were all of fine Gold, as bright as Chrystal; its Foundations were of precious Stones; its twelve Gates were twelve Pearls; at each of them stood an Angel of God. This Holy City hath no Need of the Light of the Sun, or of the Light of the Moon, for the Light of God, enlightens it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof, there is no Temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it.

'Tis our Delight to abide in stately and magnificent Houses, and in rich and glorious Palaces; therefore Paradise is expressed to us by a Dwelling, and by a Palace which God himself hath built with his own Hands. This is the Picture that the royal Prophet represents to us in *Psalm* 65. when he speaks of *God's House and of the holy Place of his Palace.* And St. *Paul* doth the like in 1 *Corinth.* 5. when he saith, *We know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* And our Saviour when he was ready to leave the World, he comforts his Apostles in this manner; *In my Father's House there are many Mansions, I go to prepare a Place for you.* And St. *John* heard a mighty Voice from Heaven, saying, *Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with Men, he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

Every one desires to be rich, there be some that esteem it their chief Happiness; therefore the Holy Ghost represents the Happiness of Heaven under the Notion of Riches and Treasure: Our Saviour himself

ſelf ſpeaks of it in this manner, in the 6th of St. *Matthew*; *Lay not up for your ſelves Treaſures upon Earth, where Moth and Ruſt doth corrupt, and where Thieves break through and ſteal; but lay up for your ſelves Treaſures in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Ruſt doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through nor ſteal.* Therefore when the holy Ghoſt deſcribes Heaven's Glory, and mentions Gold, Pearls, and precious Stones, it hath a Regard to this Notion.

And becauſe Men are for the moſt Part deſirous of Honours, Greatneſs, and Dignities, and that there is nothing in the World more eſteemed than Scepters and Crowns; therefore the Glory of Heaven is expreſs'd by a Kingdom, by Thrones, Crowns, and Triumphs. Our Saviour ſpeaks in this Language to his Apoſtles, *To you all who have continued with me in my Afflictions, I appoint a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me*, Luke 22. In another Place he ſpeaks to all his Church in general, *Fear not, little Flock, for 'tis your Father's Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom*, Luke 20. And at the laſt Day he will ſay, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World*, Matth. 25. And to the Angel of his Church in *Smyrna*, and all faithful Souls, this divine Saviour makes this Promiſe; *Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*, Rev. 2. And to the Angel of the Church of *Laodicea*; *To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne*, Rev. 3. And St *Paul* tells us, *That we run to obtain an uncorruptible Crown*, 1 Cor. 6. And when he ſaw himſelf at the End of his Race, he cries out, *I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord the Righteous Judge ſhall give me at that Day, and not to me only, but unto all them alſo that love his Appearing*, 2 Tim. 4. And St. *James* ſpeaks in the ſame Language, *Bleſſed is the Man that endureth Temptation, for when he is tried, he*

ſhall

shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him, James 1. Finally, we read that the glorified Saints have Palms in their Hands, and Crowns of Gold upon their Heads, and in their Mouths Songs of Praise, they speak thus to our Saviour; *Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and hast made us to our God, Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on Earth*, Rev. 4. 4.

The great Men of the World delight in gorgeous Apparel, some in perfum'd Garments; therefore the holy Ghost condescends to this Weakness of Man, and promiseth in Heaven Robes more fragrant than the Perfumes of *Arabia*; he promiseth a Garment whiter than Snow, and brighter than the Light it self. And *Solomon*, when he considers his Spouse, as the Type of the Church, he saith, *The King's Daughter is full of Glory within, her Cloathing is of wrought Gold, she shall be brought unto the King in Raiment of Needle-work.*

And when God himself speaks of the Glory of his Church, which he begins now, and will perfect hereafter, he saith, that he hath adorned her with Gold, Silver, and precious Stones, that he hath cloathed her with fine Linnen, with Silk and Needle-work. Therefore the Church speaks in this manner, I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath cloathed me with the Garments of Salvation, he hath cover'd me with the Robes of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with her Jewels. And if you take Notice of such as stand before the Throne of God, and in the Presence of the Lamb, that worship him Day and Night in his Temple, you shall find them cloathed with long Robes, whitened in the Blood of the Lamb. Look also upon that magnificent Woman of the *Revelations*, the true Type and Representation of the Church, and you shall see her cloathed with the Sun, and a Crown of twelve Stars upon her Head. In a Word, hearken to the Song of

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the glorified Saints, and you ſhall hear them ſpeaking to one another, *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give Honour to God, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made her ſelf ready, and to her was granted, that ſhe ſhould be arrayed in fine Linnen, clean and white, for the fine Linnen is the Righteouſneſs of Saints.*

Men commonly love good Chear, to partake of ſumptuous Feaſts, therefore the heavenly Delights are repreſented to us under the Notion of delicious Meats, and exquiſite Drinks, of noble Feaſts, and magnificent Banquets. In this Manner the royal Prophet ſpeaks of them in the 36 Pſalm, *How excellent is thy Loving-kindneſs, O God! therefore the Children of Men put their Truſt under the Shadow of thy Wings; they ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the Fatneſs of thy Houſe, and thou ſhalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleaſures.* And in the 65 Pſalm, *Bleſſed is the Man whom thou chooſeſt, and cauſeſt to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts, he ſhall be ſatisfied with the Goodneſs of thy Houſe, even of thy holy Temple.* And the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks in the ſame Language, *In this Mountain ſhall the Lord of Hoſts make unto all People a Feaſt of fat Things; a Feaſt of Wine on the Lees, of fat Things full of Marrow, of Wines on the Lees, well refined.* This Conſideration cauſeth a Doctor in the Goſpel to ſay, *Bleſſed is he that ſhall eat Bread in the Kingdom of Heaven.* And our Saviour himſelf ſaith, that many ſhall come from the *Eaſt and from the Weſt, and ſhall ſit at Table in the Kingdom of Heaven, with Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob.* *Ahaſuerus*'s Feaſt continued 100 Days; but the Feaſt, which we ſhall celebrate in Heaven, and which hath been preparing from the Foundation of the World, ſhall continue for all Eternity.

Of all Feaſts, ſuch as are for nuptial Solemnities are moſt eſteem'd, when they are for Kings and Princes of the Earth; for on ſuch Occaſions there are the greateſt and the moſt extraordinary Rejoycings; therefore the Happineſs of Heaven is expreſſed by a Marriage. Our Saviour himſelf makes Uſe of this Compariſon

pariſon in the 12 Chapter of St. *Matthew, the Kingdom of God*, ſaith he, *is like unto a King which made a Marriage for his Son.* This cauſed the glorified Church to ſpeak in this manner; *Let us rejoice and be glad and give Glory to the Lord our God, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come.* Finally, the holy Ghoſt hath commanded to write and record theſe Words for ever, *Bleſſed are thoſe that are called to the Marriage-Feaſt of the Lamb.*

Some Perſons are very much delighted with the ſweet and pleaſant Conſorts of Muſick; therefore the holy Ghoſt to ſignify to us, that in Heaven there ſhall be all Manner of Pleaſures, and nothing wanting, tells us, that about God's Throne Millions of Angels and glorified Saints ſhall ſing forth the divine Praiſe. Beſides he acquaints us with the Subſtance of their heavenly Songs: When *Iſaiah* mentions theſe wonderful *Seraphims*, that fly round about God's glorious Throne, he ſaith, *That they Cry one to another, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hoſts, the whole Earth is full of thy Glory.* And when St. *John* ſpeaks of thoſe glorified Saints, he ſaith, that they ſtand before his magnificent Throne, playing with their Harps, and ſinging a new Song, that is to ſay, a moſt rare and excellent Song; and that they have always in their Mouths the Song of *Moſes* and of the Lamb, and that Heaven it ſelf reſounds with their ſacred *Hallelujah*'s, which ſignifies, *Praiſe God*, or *ſet forth the Praiſes of God.* There is no ingenuous Soul but loves Peace and Reſt; for this Cauſe the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe is repreſented under this lovely and pleaſant Notion, as in the 4th Chapter of the *Hebrews*; *For we which believed, do enter into Reſt, as he ſaid, as I have ſworn in my Wrath, if they ſhall enter into my Reſt. For if Jeſus had given them Reſt, then would he not afterwards have ſpoken of another Day; there remaineth therefore a Reſt to the People of God; for he that is entred into his Reſt, he alſo hath ceaſed from his own Works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into*

that

that Reſt. This cauſed old *Simeon* to cry out, *Lord now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in peace.* Finally, the holy City is called *Jeruſalem*, which ſignifies a *Viſion of Peace:* And God himſelf makes this Promiſe, *Behold, I will extend Peace to her like a River*, Iſa. 65. *Phil.* 4. Wherefore, if the Peace which God grants to believing Souls in this Life, ſurpaſſeth all Underſtanding, what may we judge ſhall be the full Enjoyment of an eternal Peace in the Kingdom of Heaven? The Tongues of Men and Angels are not able to expreſs its Dignity and Excellency.

Laſtly, Becauſe Men are Lovers of Pleaſures, Delights, and Pomp, and that the moſt Part ſeek for nothing but how to drive away their Sorrows, and to recreate themſelves with Paſtimes; therefore the Felicities of Paradiſe are repreſented by Rejoycings, Pleaſures and eternal Solemnities, as in the 36 Pſalm, *Thou ſhalt cauſe them to drink of the River of thy Pleaſures.* And in the 12th Pſalm, *They that ſow in tears ſhall reap in joy.* And God himſelf ſpeaking of that moſt bleſſed Time, ſaith, *Behold, I create new Heavens and a new Earth, and the former ſhall not be remembred, nor come into Mind; but be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold I create Jeruſalem a Rejoycing, and her People a Joy.* Therefore when the Holy Ghoſt repreſents the Condition of the glorified Saints, he declares not only, that God will wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and that there ſhall be no more Sorrow, nor Crying, nor Labour, nor Pain, nor Grief, but he adds over and above, that in their Mouths there ſhall be Songs and Praiſe, and upon their Heads, an eternal Joy of Gladneſs, like to a precious Crown, which ſhall never be taken from them. For this Cauſe they call ſo earneſtly upon one another, *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give Glory to the Lord our God*, Rev. 19.

All our Senſes ſhall partake in theſe heavenly and everlaſting Pleaſures; our Eyes ſhall behold with Tranſports of Joy, the ſacred Countenance of our Redeemer, the Riches and wonderful Beauty of his Palace,

the Glory and Magnificence of his Empire; our Ears shall be delighted with the Musick of the blessed Saints, and with the Harmonies of Angels, and of the Church triumphant; our Smelling shall receive the sweet Perfumes of our Bridegroom, whose Garments are of Myrrh; and the grateful Odours of his Vine always blossoming. Our Palate shall taste the Bread of Angels, the hidden Manna, the Fruits of the Tree of Life, the Waters issuing forth to everlasting Life, and the new Wine of the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Hands shall embrace the Saviour of the World, and with our Feet we shall walk about the Streets of that golden City, the heavenly *Jerusalem*, and we shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, *Rev.* 14.

Altho' I speak to you in this Manner, I am perswaded, *Christian Souls*, that you understand very well that these Expressions, and such like, are not to be understood in a literal Sense, they are but dark Shadows and imperfect Images of the Advantages of the Life to come. You have not forgot what St. *Paul* saith, That they are Things which Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard, and which never entred into the Heart of Man, which God hath prepared for them that love him, 1 *Cor.* 2. And that this great God, whose Riches are inexhaustible, doth in us abundantly above what we are able to ask or think, *Eph.* 3. so that when you see before you all the most beautiful, amiable, glorious, and excellent Things in the World; you may say in your selves, without doubt the Glory and Happiness of Heaven is something more than all this; for it is elevated so much above all earthly Enjoyments, and surpasseth so much all the Thoughts and Conceits of Man, that 'tis not possible to describe it in its own Colours, nor to fancy it really as it is.

Think not therefore, *Christian Souls*, to meet in Heaven with a Paradise something like to your Gardens; nor with Flowers, like to such as adorn your pleasant Walks and Fields; nor Fruits like to such as hang upon your Trees: You may be assured, that God

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will discover Things infinitely more pleasant and delightful, and more lasting. Fancy not such a City built up as ours is, where Gold, Silver, Pearls and precious Stones are to be seen. You may expect something more noble and magnificent, than all the richest and most stately Cites of the World. God will cause you to see, not only the Beauty of Silver, the Purity of Gold, the Whiteness of Pearls, and the Brightness of precious Stones; but you shall discover something more beautiful, purer, whiter, brighter, and something more surprizing than any earthly Thing. Think not to receive any material Crown, or to ascend up upon Thrones, like to those of Kings and Princes, you may justly fancy something more glorious, and more lasting.

I am also perswaded, Christians, that you expect not in Heaven to find Tables covered, as those of the rich Worldlings, nor to glut your selves with a Feast, like that of the Nuptials of earthly Princes; without doubt, your Faith hath an Eye to something more heavenly and glorious. Your Soul hungers for more exquisite Dainties, and is a thirst for more delicious and sweeter Drinks. You are too well instructed to think to live in Heaven an animal and a sensual Life. Such a gross Conceit becomes only the Impostor *Mahomet*, and his imaginary Paradise.

In this Life that we lead upon Earth, there are two Things which chiefly discover our natural Infirmity. The first is our Eating and Drinking, absolutely necessary to make up the Breaches, caused by Labour, and the natural Heat, which spend and feed upon the radical Humour, which serves to our Life as Oil to a Lamp. The other is Marriage, appointed by God for the Continuance and Propagation of the Human Race. But in Heaven our Life shall be altogether angelical, spiritual, and supernatural. Our Bodies shall be no more subject to Corruption, nor to any Alteration, they shall want no more Food than the Stars do at present, and the Rest of the Celestial Bodies. There-

fore the Holy Ghost speaks expressly, That we shall neither hunger nor thirst, that the Sun shall not burn, nor any other Heat trouble us. That is to say, as we shall never be inclinable to eat or drink, the most burning Heats, and the fiercest Flames shall have no Power to hurt our Bodies, when they shall have cast off all sensual and earthly Qualities, and instead of them, shall be cloathed with Light and Glory. Therefore at that time there shall be no need of propagating the Species, or of multiplying the Persons by Marriage; for we shall not be then subject to earthly Passions, and the Number of the Elect shall be compleat. The Congregation of the Saints shall be full, and the Building of the Church shall be perfectly made up. Therefore our Saviour Jesus Christ assures us, That in the Kingdom of Heaven they shall neither take nor give in Marriage, but that we shall be like the Angels of God, we shall enjoy the Light of their Understanding, the Holiness of their Wills, and the Purity of their Affections.

When the Queen of *Sheba* saw the Glory and State of King *Solomon*, and heard all his excellent Discourses, she was ravished in Admiration, and told this great Prince, *It was a true Report that I heard in mine own Land, of thine Acts, and of thy Wisdom; howbeit, I believed not the Words, until I came, and mine Eyes had seen it; and behold, the Half was not told me; thy Wisdom and Prosperity exceedeth the Fame which I heard; happy are the Men, happy are these thy Servants which stand continually before thee, and hear thy Wisdom.* I am persuaded, believing Souls, that something like to this shall happen to us, when we shall be come to the heavenly *Jerusalem*, to behold our Lord Jesus Christ himself, of whom *Solomon* was but a Type and a Figure, for he had but a Spark of his Glory, and but a Beam of his Wisdom. When we shall see this peaceable King crowned with an heavenly Rainbow, we shall be ravish'd into Admiration, and as it were transported out of our selves; then we shall speak in this manner to his Divine Majesty, O Glorious Monarch, all that I have

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ever heard or imagined of thy Wiſdom, of thy Glory, Riches, Beauty, and extraordinary Pleaſure of thy Paradiſe, is more than true, but 'tis not the thouſandth Part of that which I ſee this Day. O bleſſed are they that dwell in thy Houſe, and that praiſe thee without ceaſing. Happy are they who behold thy glorious Face, and hear thy divine Wiſdom. After that the Queen of *Sheba* had been ſome time in the Court of King *Solomon*, ſhe returned back to her own Home; but when we ſhall be once entred into the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe, we ſhall never depart out again. We ſhall behold continually this glorious King of Kings, and we ſhall hear, with divine Tranſports of Joy, the wonderful Expreſſions of his Wiſdom; we ſhall not only be with him for ever and ever, but we ſhall always be in him, and he in us.

To take off your Mind from all carnal and worldly Thoughts, the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe is repreſented to us by the Light, as in the 12 Chapter of the *Revelations* of the Prophet *Daniel*; *They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.* And in the 13 of St. *Matth.* our Saviour ſaith expreſsly, *That the Righteous ſhall ſhine as the Sun in the Kingdom of his Father.*

Finally, 'tis promiſed, as the higheſt Glory and Happineſs, that we ſhall ſtand before the Throne of God, that we ſhall ſit with Jeſus Chriſt upon his Throne, and that we ſhall ſee his Face. St. *John* in the 22 of the *Rev.* ſpeaks in this manner, in the Deſcription of the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*; he ſaith, that the Throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it, that his Servants ſhall ſerve him, and ſee his Face, and that his Name ſhall be upon their Forehead. When we look upon the Sun, our Faces become not brighter nor more luminous; nay, many times our Eyes thereby dazle, and our Skin becomes blacker and more ſwarthy. But when we ſhall look upon God in his Love and Glory, we ſhall be perfectly enlightened, and be-

come brighter and more ſhining. This appears by *Moſes*'s Perſon, when he came down from the holy Mountain, his Face was full of Beams of Light, ſo that the Children of *Iſrael* could not endure its Splendour. If therefore this faithful Servant of God had ſuch a bright Countenance, by his Continuance with God upon an earthly Mountain, during the Space of forty Days and forty Nights, and by a Sight of ſome light Expreſſions of his Glory; what will be, think ye, your Light, and the Brightneſs of your Countenances, when you ſhall be raiſed above the Heavens, to continue with God, and to behold his Face thouſands and thouſands of Ages, and at the End of all that Time, it ſhall be but the Beginning of that moſt bleſſed Contemplation which ſhall never end?

When we caſt our Eyes upon a beautiful Perſon, we become neither more beautiful nor happier; nothing but an unprofitable *Idea* remains in our Fancy, and many Times that alſo quickly vaniſheth away. But when we ſhall look upon God, we ſhall become like him, and in this Likeneſs we ſhall find Fulneſs of Joy, of Happineſs and Glory; this is promiſed to us by the royal Prophet, in the 16 *Pſalm*, *In thy Preſence, O God, is Fulneſs of Joy; and at thy right Hand there are Pleaſures for evermore.* And in the 17 *Pſalm*; *As for me, I will behold thy Face in Righteouſneſs, I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake, with thy Likeneſs.* And the beloved Diſciple, of the beloved of the Father, whoſe Writings are full of Love, confirms this Truth; *Beloved*, ſaith he, *Now we are the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be; but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.*

You ſee therefore, chriſtian Souls, to what high Perfection of Glory and Felicity we have a Right to pretend. For in Heaven God ſhall not only make us ſhine as the Sun and the Stars, he ſhall not only cloath us with the Brightneſs of the glorified Saints and Angels; but he promiſeth a great deal more, to make us like to himſelf; he ſhall not only ſatisfy us with the

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Fatneſs of his Houſe, and cauſe us to drink of the Rivers of his Pleaſures; he ſhall not only fill us with his Treaſures, enlighten us with his Brightneſs, cloath us with his Honours, and crown us with his Glory; but he himſelf will become our Meat and our Drink, our Treaſure, our Sun and Glory. And if I may ſo ſpeak, to ſatisfie, and perfect our Happineſs, God ſhall, as it were diſſolve himſelf into Rivers and Seas of divine and unſpeakable Pleaſures. But that I may not be miſunderſtood in ſuch bold and figurative Language, it ſhall ſuffice me to ſay with St. *Paul*, *That God will be in us all in all*; that is to ſay, that he will dwell and make his Abode in us, in reſpect of his Being; and that he will cauſe us to feel in us his glorious Preſence as much as a finite and limited Nature, as ours, is capable of. What the *Jews* have invented of the Manna, which their Fathers fed on in the Wilderneſs, may juſtly be appropriated to Almighty God, as he intends to reveal himſelf to us in Heaven. For there is no Taſte but ſhall be ſatisfied, no Deſire but ſhall be filled. Moreover, God ſhall be our Meat and our Drink, our Light, alſo our Cloathing, and all that we can imagine; in him, and his Divine Enjoyments we ſhall find beyond all that we can think or deſire. The Knowledge of ſpiritual and celeſtial Things, which we attain to here below, is like the Breaking of the Day; and that we ſhall enjoy hereafter, ſhall be like that of the Sun, when it ſhines in our Meridian. But to ſpeak in the Apoſtle's Language, *Now we know in part, and we propheſy in part; but when that which is perfect ſhall come, then that which is in part, ſhall be done away. For now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly, but then we ſhall ſee him Face to Face.* Whilſt we continue in this Life, God diſcovers to us only the Borders of his Wiſdom, we cannot underſtand much of it. But in the Life to come, he ſhall reveal to us the Depths of his glorious Myſteries, into which the Angels themſelves deſire to pry. In our Underſtandings, God ſhall be as a Sun to enlighten them for ever and ever, and ſcatter away all

Miſts of Errours and Miſtakes. At preſent our Will hath its Imperfections, and oft-times it rebels againſt God, but then it ſhall be perfectly ſanctifyed and reformed according to the Image of God. It ſhall burn with an holy Zeal, and with a Love for him. It ſhall deſire nothing but his Glory, and a Conformity to his holy Will. It ſhall not only obey God without Reſiſtance, but it ſhall fly with an holy Earneſtneſs and Speed, to the Performance of his ſacred Commands; whilſt we remain in the Fetters of this infirm and ſinful Fleſh, there is always ſome Filth and Diſorder in our Affections; but when we ſhall come to this State of Glory, God will ſanctify them in ſuch a manner, by his Preſence, that they ſhall be purer and cleaner than the Stars, or the Sun-beams; they ſhall become celeſtial Fires and divine Flames, proceeding from God's Love to us. In a Word, that Being of Beings, who is Perfection it ſelf, that Author and Organ of all Beauty, that Object ſo exceeding glorious and lovely, ſhall raviſh us in ſuch a manner, that our Underſtandings ſhall be continually employed in beholding him; our Wills and Affections in loving and embracing him; and all the Faculties of our Souls ſhall labour to be united to him, and to be like him. It ſhall be in this manner, that we ſhall be made Partakers of the divine Nature. For we muſt not fancy that we ſhall be made Partakers of God's infinite Being; for his divine Eſſence is indiviſible, and uncommunicable to the Creature, ſo that none but God can enjoy it. But God's Holineſs ſhall imprint in our Souls its bleſſed and glorious Image, and that of all his wonderful Perfections; when God ſhall ſhew himſelf to us as he is, he will cauſe us to become like him, by producing in us an Impreſſion of his divine Countenance.

It may be you will enquire of me, whether we ſhall ſee God, and how we ſhall behold him? This Queſtion is ſo rich and conſiderable, that it deſerves to be examined with an holy and religious Application. I am perſwaded, Chriſtians, that you will not be diſpleaſed,

pleaſed, not only to hear my Judgement, but that of the Holy Scriptures from whence we draw all our inſtructions, as out of a Fountain. Some imagine that God cannot be ſeen, neither in this Life, nor in the Life to come. Their Reaſons are very ſtrong and weighty; for firſt, God is of an inviſible Nature. This Attribute is aſcribed to him by the ſacred Writers, as in the 11th of the *Hebrews*, the Apoſtle ſaith, that *Moſes*, by Faith, ſaw him who is inviſible. And in the 1ſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, in the firſt Chapter he ſaith, *To the King Eternal, Immortal, Inviſible, the only wiſe God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever, Amen.* Secondly, we read in the 33 of *Exodus*, when *Moſes* ſaid to God, *I pray thee let me ſee thy Glory*; God anſwered him, thou canſt not ſee my Face, for no man ſhall ever ſee my Face and live. Thirdly, St. *John* in the 1ſt Chapter of his Goſpel ſpeaketh thus; *No Man hath ſeen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the Boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.* Laſtly St. *Paul* ſeems to remove all Doubt, for he ſaith, not only *That God alone hath Immortality, that he dwells in a Light unto which no Man can approach, and that no Man hath ever ſeen him*; but he ſaith more, *that no Man can ſee him*, 1 Tim. 6.

Others are of a contrary Opinion, That God may be ſeen in this Life, but that in the Life to come he ſhall be ſeen more perfectly. That which encourageth this Opinion is, that God hath put into the Hearts of all his Children, an earneſt Deſire of ſeeing his Face, and that in this Contemplation they place their greateſt Happineſs and Glory. This was *David's* Deſire, a Man after God's own Heart, in the fourth *Pſalm*, *There be many that ſay, who will ſhew us any Good? Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon us.* And in the 42 Pſalm, *My Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God, when ſhall I come and appear before God?* This is the Deſire alſo of the Prophet *Aſaph* in the 87 Pſalm, *O God of Hoſts, cauſe thy Face to ſhine, and we ſhall be ſaved.* Secondly, we have heard *David* ſay, *I ſhall ſee*

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thy Face in Righteousness, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy Likeness, Psalm 17. And St. *Paul* promiseth, that we shall see God Face to Face. And St. *John* assures us, *That we shall see God as he is.* Thirdly, in the 12 Chapter of *Numbers*, God speaks in this manner to *Aaron* and *Miriam*, who had murmured against their Brother *Moses*; *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make my self known unto him in a Vision, and will speak unto him in a Dream; my Servant* Moses *is not so, who is faithful in all mine House, with him will I speak Mouth to Mouth, even apparently, and not in dark Speeches, and the Similitude of the Lord shall he behold.* Lastly, we have heard the Voice from Heaven, that represents to me the blessed State of the Glorified, saying, *That they shall see the Face of God.*

If it were lawful for me to engage my self in such an high Meditation, which is above the Capacity of Men and Angels, I should declare to you in few Words, how it may be said that we shall see God, and in what manner 'tis impossible to behold him. But, first we must take notice of two or three Distinctions, which being well understood, will remove the principal Difficulties in this Question.

First, God may be considered in three several Respects; as he is in himself, and in his proper Being. 'Tis in this Respect, that our Souls earnestly long for him, and desire to draw near, and be united to him, as to their sovereign Good, and the bottomless Fountain of Glory and Happiness. Secondly, as he reveals and discovers himself on Earth, by certain Images and Tokens of his favourable Presence. Thirdly, as he shall manifest himself in Heaven by the glorious Images and divine Marks of his Presence.

Secondly, We must distinguish the several Kinds of Sight; for there is the Sight of the Body, which looks only upon the Objects, whereof the Images and Species are within the Reach and Capacity of our Eye-Sight, as are Colour and Light. There is the Sight of the Understanding, which sees and beholds the Things

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that are at a diſtance from our Senſes, as the ſpiritual and inviſible Subſtances, and the eſſential Forms of the Body. There is alſo the Sight of Faith, which riſeth yet ſomething higher than our Underſtandings; as 'tis during our Abode here below; when 'tis enlightned with God's divine Grace, it ſees and beholds Things which the Eye of the Body never ſaw, and the ſenſual Underſtandings of Men could never comprehend, as the Myſteries of Chriſtian Religion, and the Powers of the World to come.

Laſtly, We muſt diſtinguiſh the Knowledge of the Underſtanding; for ſometimes 'tis obſcure and confuſed, at other times 'tis clear and diſtinct. Moreover, that Knowledge which is the cleareſt and the moſt diſtinct is of two Sorts, the one hath Bounds and Limits ſuitable to its Subject, that is to ſay, ſuitable to the Ability and Reach of the Underſtanding; the other is abſolute, and of the ſame Extent as its Object, that is to ſay, as the Thing it ſelf which the Underſtanding looks upon and beholds.

God, as he is in himſelf, and in his own Eſſence and Being, hath never been ſeen by the Eye of the Body, and ſhall never be, neither in this Life, nor in the Life to come; for God is a Spirit, and of an inviſible Nature, 1 *Tim.* 6. In this Reſpect St. *Paul* affirms, *That God dwells in a Light which no Man can approach unto, that no Man hath ever ſeen him, nor can ſee him*, John 3. But this good God, who of himſelf is inviſible, delights to ſhew himſelf to his Creatures in ſeveral Ways.

Firſt, God ſhews himſelf to all Men, in the Works of the Creation of the great World, for as St. *Paul* ſaith in the 1ſt of the Romans, *The inviſible Things of God from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* Particularly, he hath given the Light, which is as his eldeſt Daughter, and the firſt of all outward Productions, an Image and Reſemblance of him. For as there is nothing more ample,

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purer, and more beautiful than the Light? So there is no visible Creature that represents so well, this great God, who is a Being most pure, most beautiful and perfect, the Father of Lights, and the true Sun of our Souls.

Secondly, God discovers himself in all the Workings of his wonderful Providence, and chiefly in his extraordinary and miraculous Operations. For when Men perceive Works which exceed all the ordinary Strength of Nature, they are forced to acknowledge, that they come immediately from an infinite Power. As *Pharoah*'s Magicians, when they found by their Magick Art, that they were not able to counterfeit *Moses*'s Miracle, confessed, *That it was the Finger of God.*

Thirdly, God discovers himself in his holy and divine Word, which is to us a beautiful and perfect Looking-Glass, where we may see his Image and Brightness of his Glory; This was St. *Paul*'s Judgement, when he saith, *That all we that behold as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord, with open Face, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,* 2 Cor. 3. 18.

Fourthly, God revealed himself to the Church o *Israel*, in the Ark, the Sign and ordinary Token of his gracious Presence. He spoke to his People from the Midst of the two golden Cherubims, and published his divine Oracles. There he was pleased to discover himself in divers Representations, chiefly in the Cloud and Fire which came down from Heaven. Therefore the Sign, bearing the Name of the Thing signified, is sometimes stiled *The Lord*; as in that Passage, where *David* saith, *My Soul is athirst for God, for the mighty and living God; O when shall I go and appear in the Presence of God!* Psal. 42.

Fifthly, God manifested himself to the Patriarchs and Prophets in Dreams and Visions, by divine Raptures, and prophetical Elevations. In this manner he appeared to the Patriarch *Jacob* in *Bethel*; for when 'tis said that God was at the End of the mystical Lad-

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der, which reach'd up to Heaven, without doubt, he gave ſome Sign and Teſtimony there of his Preſence. And when the Prophet *Iſaiah* mentions his glorious Throne, he makes no difficulty to ſay, *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple; above it ſtood the Seraphims, each one had ſix Wings, with two he covered his Face, and with two he covered his Feet, and with two he did fly; and one cried to another and ſaid, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hoſts, and the whole earth is full of his Glory, and the Poſts of the door moved at the Voice of him that cried, and the Houſe was filled with Smoak*, Iſa. 6. And the Prophet *Micaiah*, when he ſpeaks of his Viſion, he ſaith, *I have ſeen the Lord ſitting upon his Throne, and all the Hoſt of Heaven ſtanding at his right hand and at his left*, 1 Kings 22. And the Prophet *Daniel* deſcribing one of his Viſions, ſpeaks in this manner; *I beheld, till the thrones were caſt down, and the ancient of days did ſit, whoſe garment was white as ſnow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool, his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire, a fiery ſtream iſſued and came forth from before him, thouſand thouſands miniſtred unto him, and ten thouſand times ten Thouſand ſtood before him.*

Sixthly, God ſhewed himſelf to *Moſes* in a particular manner, not only when he appeared to him in *Horeb*, and ſpoke to him out of the flaming Buſh, but eſpecially when God appeared to him in the holy Mountain, and for the Space of forty Days and forty Nights, diſcourſed with him familiarly, as with a Friend. For at that time, he ſet before him ſuch glorious and magnificent Tokens of his divine Preſence, that it was almoſt the ſame Thing, as if he had ſeen God himſelf. God gave him more Light and Knowledge of his Glory, than to any other of his Prophets, and revealed himſelf to him in a more familiar Manner than to any other living Perſon. Becauſe of theſe glorious and extraordinary Appearances of God's Preſence, and of the Brightneſs of his Light, which

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shined so clear in the Soul of *Moses*, because of that holy Familiarity which he had with God, that he speaks of it in such a manner, in the 12th Chapter of the Book of *Numbers*, for we cannot understand that Place in a literal Sense; That *Moses* did really see God himself, and that with the Eyes of the Body, he beheld his Being, which is altogether invisible. But we must thus understand it, that never any Man beheld such glorious Expressions of the Godhead with the Eyes of the Body; That never any Man discoursed so familiarly with God as *Moses*; never any Man hath ever had so clear and plain a Knowledge of his great Glory and divine Majesty.

Seventhly, God hath often appeared to Men in humane Shapes, and hath given them such visible Expressions of his Holy Presence, that such as have seen those Images, tell us that they have seen God. 'Tis in this Manner that *Jacob* speaks, when he had wrestled with an humane Body, moved, not only by an assisting Angel, but also by God himself, who discovers there his Divine Vertue; *I have seen*, saith he, *God Face to Face, and my Soul hath been saved*, Gen. 32. *Manoah*, the Father of *Sampson*, tells as much, when he had seen the humane Shape in which God was pleased to appear, when he ascended up into Heaven in the Flames of his Sacrifice; *For certain we shall die, for we have seen God*, Judg. 13. In like manner, when God appeared to *Abraham* in the Shape of a Man, this Man is called the Lord, and *Abraham* bowed himself before him, and worshipped. And at another time this holy Patriarch saw no less than Three humane Shapes which appeared to him at once. Some think that God was visible but in one of these Shapes, and the Two others were Angels. That which confirms this Opinion is, that of these Three Persons, there is but one that speaks as God, and receives *Abraham*'s Adoration, and then he appears no more; the Two others are stiled Angels, in the Beginning of the 19 Chapter.

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But others believe with ſome ancient Doctors of the Church, that theſe three humane Shapes were a true image, and living Repreſentation of the moſt holy, moſt glorious, and moſt wonderful Trinity. In this Opinion there is nothing contrary to the Analogy of Faith.

Finally, God hath diſcovered himſelf by his Son in a particular manner, he is named therefore, *The Image of God, the Image of the inviſible God, and God manifeſted in Fleſh.* God hath not only imprinted in him, ſome Tokens of his Godhead, and Marks of his Divine Power; he cauſed him not to walk and move as the borrowed Bodies of the *Old Teſtament:* He hath not only engraven in him, the perfect Image of all his divine Perfections; God is not in him in a Shadow, or a Figure, as he was in the Ark, and in *Solomon*'s Temple; but he hath dwelt in him bodily, and by his eternal Godhead, as St. *Paul* informs us, *That in him dwelleth bodily*, that is to ſay, really, and eſſentially, *all the Fulneſs of the Godhead*; therefore our Saviour tells St. *Philip*, *That he that hath ſeen him, hath ſeen the Father*, John 14.

This being granted, let us now conſider how we ſee God now here below, and how we ſhall ſee him hereafter in Heaven. At preſent we ſee him with the Eyes of the Body in his viſible Works; and we ſee his Being alſo with the Eye of our Underſtanding, but in a weak and imperfect Manner; we know him with a very obſcure and clouded Knowledge. For this Cauſe St. *Paul* ſaith very well and truly, *That we know in part, and we propheſy in part.* We ſee God alſo with the Eye of Faith; 'tis with this Eye that we ſee him, as *Moſes* did, who is inviſible, and that we behold our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſitting at the right Hand of God the Father, above all Principalities and Powers, worſhipped and adored by all the glorified Church in Heaven. In Paradiſe we hope to ſee with the Eyes of our glorified Body, the Images and Marks of the Divinity, ſo glo-

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rious, and magnificent, so beautiful and full of Majesty, that in Comparison of that, whatsoever appeared to the Prophets and Patriarchs in their illustrious Visions, was nothing but Obscurity and Darkness. And with the same Eyes of the Body we shall see God in the Person of our Saviour, who is the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person; so that we may well say with *Joy*, in a full Assurance of Faith, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and tho' after my skin, worms destroy this body, I shall see God in my flesh, whom I shall see for my self, and my eyes shall behold, and not another*, Job 19. But for the Essence of God, and for the eternal God-Head, we shall not, nor cannot see it with the Eyes of the Body, let them become never so glorious, incorruptible, and immortal. We shall neither see it with the Eye of Faith, for then Faith shall be totally abolished, and we shall not walk any more by Faith, but by Sight: But we shall see God with the Eye of the Understanding, enlightned with a divine Glory. Now, as we have taken notice, there are two Sorts of Contemplations and Knowledges, the one perfect, proportioned to the Object, which we behold and look upon; the other imperfect, suitable to the Subject that looks and sees. Our future Knowledge of God, shall not be of the first, but of the latter Sort, that is to say, That we shall never see into the Bottom of the Mysteries of God's Divine Majesty, and of his Glory. We shall never know perfectly, this highest Perfection, this infinite Being, this incomprehensible and glorious Godhead. For Things are in their Actions, as they are in their Beings, and in their Abilities: Now in the most glorious State of Heaven, our Beings and Abilities shall be limited and circumscribed: Therefore it shall be absolutely impossible for us to comprehend perfectly the Being of God, which is infinite in it self, and in all its wonderful Perfections. The holy Angels themselves, the Cherubims, and Seraphims, these Creatures of Light

and

and Glory, are not able to pry into theſe bottomleſs Depths, they are not able to approach this infinite Light. In a Word, it belongs only to God himſelf, to comprehend and underſtand perfectly, the infinite Glory, and the higheſt Perfections of the Godhead.

Altho' our Sight ſhall not be able to ſearch into the Bottom of theſe Depths of the Divinity, tho' we ſhall never be able to comprehend perfectly the infinite Being of God; nevertheleſs we hope to behold openly this wonderful Object, and to obtain as much Knowledge of it as ſhall be requiſite to render us perfectly happy. For as when our Eye beholds the Noon-Sun, it cannot ſtedfaſtly look upon it, nor receive all its Beams, but it partakes of as much as is neceſſary to enlighten it; and when there ſhould be a thouſand Suns, our Eyes would never make uſe of more Light than they do at preſent. Likewiſe, in beholding the Father of Lights, this beautiful Sun of our Souls, 'tis altogether impoſſible to admit the Immenſity of its Beams; but we ſhall partake of as much as ſhall be neceſſary to drive away all our Darkneſs, and to fill us full of a perfect Light, to make us become Light in the Lord, and to cauſe us to ſhine for ever as ſo many Stars and little Suns. As an empty Veſſel, when 'tis caſt into the Sea, comprehends not all its Waters, but receives only enough to fill it up, ſo that there is no part empty: Thus, when we ſhall be caſt into the Ocean of the Godhead, we ſhall not be able to comprehend and receive God's infinite Glory and Happineſs, but we ſhall receive and comprehend as much as ſhall content all our Deſires, and ſatisfy all our craving Appetites. So that there ſhall be nothing at all wanting in us, which might be expected in the higheſt Felicity of an human Creature.

I do not ſay, in the higheſt Felicity, abſolutely without Limitation; for there are two Sorts of Felicities, the one abſolutely perfect, beyond which there can be nothing expected. This Felicity or Happineſs is only to be found in God. The other is perfect, in a cer-

tain Degree. As the perfect Happineſs of the Angels is to attain to that Degree of Glory, of which the angelical Nature is capable: Likewiſe, the perfect Happineſs of Man, is to enjoy all that Bleſſedneſs, which the humane Nature alone and ſingle is able to enjoy; I muſt ſay the ſingle Nature of Man, to diſtinguiſh it from that which is united to the Perſon of the eternal Son of God. For by this Union, this hath attained to an incommunicable Glory, of which other Creatures cannot partake in the ſame Perfection; it hath attained to an Happineſs, far above the Glory of all the Children of God, and of all the holy Angels of Heaven, far above what they can or may expect.

Again, I may ſay that there is a ſupreme and perfect Happineſs independent, which ſubſiſts of its ſelf, without any foreign Aſſiſtance. This Kind of Happineſs is only to be found in God: For as he is of himſelf an infinite Being, he borrows nothing from others, and of himſelf is abſolutely and perfectly happy. The other Happineſs is that which proceeds not out of our ſelves, but is derived to us from another, ſuch is the Glory and Happineſs of the Angels. This Leſſon the holy Ghoſt teacheth us in theſe Words, *God puts Light into his Angels*; that is to ſay, that theſe holy Spirits have nothing of Light or Glory, but what is derived to them from the Father of Lights, and his gracious Aſpect. Such alſo is the Glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as Mediator. Therefore he ſpeaks thus to God his Father, *Glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee*, Joh. 17. In a Word, ſuch ſhall be our Glory and Happineſs; for as we have our Being from God, 'tis from him that we derive our Well-being alſo; and 'tis from him only that we expect all our Glory and Bliſs.

From hence you may eaſily underſtand, that God is the only Object, and the only Source of our eternal Glory and future Happineſs. If you enquire from me what ſhall be the eſſential Form; I anſwer, that it ſhall be our Likeneſs and Reſemblance with God, which

which ſhall be as perfect as humane Creature is capable of. Now this Reſemblance and Similitude ſhall conſiſt in three Things, in a pure and bright Light, which ſhall not be mixed with the leaſt Obſcurity; in a perfect and a compleat Holineſs, where there ſhall not be the leaſt Blemiſh; and in an infinite and unalterable Joy and Content, where there ſhall never be the leaſt Cloud of Grief; but of this we have ſufficiently treated already.

Some there are that enquire whether in Paradiſe there ſhall be an Equality, or an Inequality of Glories and Happineſſes. This Queſtion is more curious than neceſſary. For we need not enquire whether there ſhall be any more or leſs happy than our ſelves. It ſhould ſuffice us for our Comfort, to know, that if we be true Believers, and truly penitent; if we fear God as we ought, if we ſerve him with a religious Mind until the laſt Gaſp; that in ſuch a Caſe we ſhall attain to the Glory of the Children of God, and poſſeſs with them a perfect and eternal Happineſs. Nevertheleſs, that we may ſeem to omit nothing which might give Satisfaction to every believing Soul, I ſhall examine this Particular, but it ſhall be without advancing any new Thing, which I have not ſeen in the holy Goſpel, nor learn'd from the true Doctor of our Souls. I ſhall declare the Opinion of the moſt Learned upon this rich and excellent Subject. Afterwards I ſhall add mine own, which I ſubmit, as the Reſt of this Treatiſe, to the Judgment of the wiſer and more learned Perſons, who are better acquainted than I am, with the ſpiritual and heavenly Enjoyments.

Some believe, that in Paradiſe there ſhall be every where the ſame Glory and Happineſs, equal and uniform in every Perſon that ſhall enjoy it. Their principal Reaſons are: Firſt, That we ſhall have no Glory nor Happineſs, but that which hath been purchaſed for us by the Death and Paſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and that as this glorious Saviour hath purcha-

sed this Glory and Happiness for all the Elect equally, they shall all enjoy it in the highest Degree and Perfection. Secondly, that the Holiness of all the Blessed shall be perfect; therefore, as they shall be all perfectly holy, they shall be all likewise perfectly happy in the same Degree. Thirdly, that our Saviour saith expressly without any Exception, *That the Saints shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, Mat. 23. Now the Sun is the King of the Stars, and the brightest of all the heavenly Bodies. Fourthly, That the Elect are represented in Heaven as so many Kings, having upon their Heads Crowns of Gold, *Rev.* 1. 4, 5. Now there is no Inequality between Kings; for each of them is in Possession of Sovereignty, and an independent and supreme Authority. Fifthly, That Jesus Christ represents to us the last Transactions of the World, by the Parable of a Father of a Family, who at the End of the Day, bestows the same Salary upon every one that hath laboured in his Vine-yard, *Matth.* 20. Sixthly, that 'tis said in general Terms, *That we shall see God Face to Face, and that we shall see him as he is*, 1 Cor. 13. 1 Joh. 3. And that in this blessed Vision shall consist the chief Happiness of Man. Lastly, That after the Resurrection, *God shall be in us all in all*; which Expression declares the highest and most compleat Happiness and Glory.

Others think the contrary, that in Heaven there shall be an Inequality of Glory, and several Degrees of Happiness. This their Opinion they strengthen chiefly with two Passages of holy Scripture, the one is in the 14 of St. *John*, where Christ saith to his Apostles, *In my Father's House there are many Mansions*. The other is in the 1 *Cor.* 25. where St. *Paul* discoursing at large, of the Happiness of the Saints after the Resurrection, saith, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory; so also is the Resurrection of the Dead.*

There are some that are not content to believe an Inequality of Glory and Happiness, but undertake farther

farther to diſcourſe of this Matter, with as much Confidence, as if God had admitted them to the Knowledge of his eternal Secrets; as if he had diſcovered to them all the Wonders of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, more plainly than to his beloved Diſciple. They tell us, that there ſhall be not only divers Degrees of Glory and Happineſs, but they affirm, who they are that ſhall obtain ſuch and ſuch Degrees. They determine abſolutely, and preſcribe what Glory ſhall belong to Virgins, what ſhall be that of Confeſſors, and what ſhall be that of Martyrs. In a word, ſome are ſo puffed up with an high Conceit of themſelves, and of their meritorious Acts, that they make an open Profeſſion of being of the Number of ſuch as ſhall obtain the higheſt Degrees of Glory and Happineſs.

But my Opinion is, That the Truth is to be found between theſe two Extremes. I ſhall not preſcribe a Law to the Conſciences of any, in a Matter whereof the Deciſion is not abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation. Yet we may ſay, that in Heaven there ſhall be divers Degrees of Glory and Happineſs, but we dare not deſcribe them, nor venture to apply them to any Perſons, or to tell who of us ſhall poſſeſs ſuch and ſuch Degrees. This were a bold Preſumption againſt Heaven, and an Attempt upon the forbidden Fruit. Inſtead of being ſerviceable to others, we ſhould wilfully loſe our ſelves. For ſuch as are ſo audacious, to ſearch into the Divine Majeſty, ſhall be ſwallowed up in his Glory, *Prov.* 25.

And tho' we verily believe Degrees of Glory, yet we may ſay, without Offence to any Perſon, that this Belief is not to be eſtabliſhed upon the fore-mentioned Paſſages, from whence we cannot make any ſuch Concluſion; for in the 14. of St. *John*, our Saviour ſaith not that there are divers Degrees, or Divine Manſions, whereof ſome are richer and more glorious than others, but only, that in his Father's Houſe there are many Manſions. The Meaning of our divine Saviour is clear as the Day; he had an Intent to raiſe up the

drooping Courage of his holy Apostles, and to comfort them in his Absence; for that purpose he assures them, that he was going to lodge in an House, where there is not only Room for himself, but also for them, and for all that shall believe in him, through their Teaching. He expounds his Words plainly in the 17 Chapter of the same Gospel, where he speaks to God in this Manner, *I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.* For the other Text of the 1 of the *Corinth.* I beseech you, devout Souls, read over the Apostle's Words, and consider with a religious Observation, what goes before, and what follows after. You shall find that the Apostle designs not to compare the Saints, the one with the other, but only to discover the Difference which is between our Bodies as they are in this corruptible and mortal Life, and as they shall be when they shall have put on Incorruption and Immortality. Therefore, when he had said, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, another of the Stars, for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory.* He doth not add, likewise, so shall be the Glory of one blessed Person differing from another; but he saith, *So shall be the Resurrection from the Dead; The Body is sown in Corruption, it shall be raised in Incorruption; 'tis sown in Dishonour, 'tis raised in Glory; 'tis sown in Weakness, 'tis raised in Power; 'tis sown a natural Body, 'tis raised a spiritual Body.*

What is it therefore that may incline us to believe these divers Degrees of Glory and Happiness? I answer, First, the divers and different Pains and Punishments of the Damned. For as in Hell there shall be divers Degrees of Torments; likewise 'tis very probable, that in Heaven, there shall be divers Degrees of Happiness, and several Degrees of Glory. Secondly, God to declare his Divine Wisdom, which is various in all Things, bestows at present all his Blessings and Riches with a wonderful Variety, and admirable Order. Thus you may see in Nature,

that

that God hath ſcattered up and down the World, divers Gifts and Excellencies; for Example, the Smell and Beauty of Roſes, is different from that of the Lillies; the Brightneſs of the Diamonds, is not like that of Rubies; the Light of the Sun differs from that of the Moon and Stars. 'Tis very probable, that above all the Heavens, there ſhall be divers Degrees of Light and Glory. Among the holy Angels, there are Diſtinctions of Honour, and ſome Dignities are named *Arch-Angels*, *Thrones*, *Dominions*, *Principalities*, *and Powers*. As therefore amongſt the Angels there are divers Degrees of Glory; 'tis alſo very probable that the ſame Order ſhall be obſerved amongſt the Glorified in Heaven. Beſides, as in the Church militant, the Graces of God differ very much; ſo the Souls of the Faithful are not the ſame in all Reſpects, they have different Qualities and Excellencies. There are in them divers Degrees of Light, of Knowledge, of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Holineſs. Likewiſe, according to the Analogy of Faith, there ſhould be alſo in the Church glorified, divers Degrees of Glory and Happineſs; and the rather, becauſe, Glory is nothing elſe, but the Completion and Perfection of Grace. This Reaſon is ſo much the ſtronger, becauſe of the Parable of the Talents: Jeſus Chriſt beſtows upon his Servants a Glory, proportionable to the former Riches of his Grace. None can imagine that the Words relate to God's Favours diſtributed to his Children on Earth, for our Lord ſpeaks of that which he intends to do for them, when he ſhall come down from Heaven to judge the World. The Words relate to the Time when he ſhall ſay to ſuch as have well employed the Talents of his Mercy, *Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter into the Joy of thy Lord.* They relate alſo to the Time when he ſhall cauſe the unprofitable Servant to *be caſt into utter Darkneſs, where there ſhall be Weeping and Gnaſhing of Teeth.* I ought not to forget what we read on this Subject, 2 *Cor.* 9. *He which ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap alſo ſparingly; and he which ſoweth*

bountifully, shall reap also bountifully. They are St. *Paul's* Words, which expressly declare an Inequality of Glory and Happiness to be expected amongst the Rewards in Heaven. It may also be worthy of our Observation, that the Felicities of Heaven are represented to us by a Feast, where all partake of the same Meats, but some are advanc'd to a more honourable Room than others. This, as I conceive, may be gather'd from our Saviour's Words; *Many shall come from the East, and from the West, and shall sit at Table in the Kingdom of Heaven, with* Abraham, Isaac *and* Jacob. It may also be understood from that other Passage, where *Lazarus* is carried by the holy Angels into *Abraham's* Bosom. Lastly, I ground my Opinion upon the 12th Chapter of *Daniel*, where this blessed Prophet, when he had spoken in general Terms of the future Happiness of the Faithful, who shall rise to eternal Life, he offers to mention some, on whom God hath bestowed more Light upon Earth, and whose Ministry he hath made use of, to bring many Souls to Salvation; amongst these he seems to put divers Degrees of Glory; *They that are wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that bring many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever.* From this Text one may apparently conclude, that as the Light of the Firmament differs much from that of the bright Stars; and as amongst the Stars there is a Diversity of Light, in the like Manner there shall be divers and different Degrees of Glory amongst the Blessed in Heaven.

Now in Answer to that Argument, that Jesus Christ hath purchased for us the Glory and Happiness of Heaven, that therefore this Glory and Happiness should be equal, I confess this Reason is weighty. I intend not absolutely to deny it, but I shall offer several Things to the Consideration of the pious and devout Souls who shall peruse this Treatise. First, that altho' the Blood of Jesus Christ hath purchased for us Heaven; and that we are not able to claim it by our most regenerate Actions, or merit it by our most

painful

painful Sufferings and Martyrdom; becauſe that when we have performed all that is commanded, our Saviour requires us to ſay, *We be unprofitable Servants, becauſe we have done nothing but what we are bound to do*, Luk. 17. And becauſe his holy Apoſtle aſſures us, That *When all Things are reckon'd up, the Sufferings of this preſent Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed to us*, Rom. 8. Nevertheleſs, God is ſo good, merciful, and bountiful, that he bears with our Imperfections, that he rewards as a Father, with a free Reward, all the good Works of his Servants, chiefly the Works of Charity. Therefore Jeſus Chriſt tells his Apoſtles, and generally all the Faithful, *Whoſoever ſhall give unto you to drink a Cup of Water, becauſe you are Chriſt's, verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall not loſe his Reward.* And becauſe 'tis the Cuſtom of the eaſtern People, to warm their Drink, therefore to give a Cup of cold Water may be reckoned the ſmalleſt Aſſiſtance. Our Saviour ſaith, *Whoſoever ſhall give unto one of theſe little Ones to drink a Cup of cold Water only, in the Name of a Diſciple, verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall not loſe his Reward*, Mat. 10. If ſuch as beſtow a Cup of cold Water for God's ſake, are rewarded in Heaven, what may not thoſe bountiful Souls expect there, who now ſpend their Eſtates in charitable Deeds? Beſides, we have heard a Prophet tell us, that all ſuch as by the Light of their Doctrines, and the Holineſs of their Lives, lead many Souls to their Salvation, ſhall ſhine for ever in Heaven, as ſo many bright Stars. It ſtands with Reaſon; for if our Saviour will in his infinite Mercy, reward ſuch a ſmall Kindneſs as the Gift of a Draught of Water, to one of his Children; they ſhall excel in Glory, who ſpend for his ſake in his Quarrel, every Drop of their Blood, and by their Deaths confirm his holy Goſpel: *This is a faithful Saying, If we die with Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall alſo live with him; if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him.* But that which ſeems to me yet ſtronger, which makes for this Purpoſe, is, That all the ſpiri-

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tual Graces which are bestowed upon us in this Life, proceed from the holy Ghost, purchased for us by the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his precious Blood. Now these Graces are different and various. Therefore as there are divers Degrees in *Grace*, why should not there be also divers Degrees in *Glory*, since both have been purchased for us with the same Price, by the Death and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ?

The other Argument drawn from the Happiness and Perfection of the Glorified is rational, but not infallible. For several Diamonds may be perfect in their Kind, so that the clearest Eye cannot take Notice of any Default. Nevertheless, they may differ in Weight and Price. All the Stars have their Perfection and Light, nevertheless, one Star differs from another Star in Glory; all the Angels of Heaven are perfectly happy and holy, and yet there is a great Inequality amongst them in Glory and Dignity. Likewise, altho' all the Blessed shall attain to a perfect Holiness, in my Judgment, that cannot hinder the Diversity of Degrees of Glory and Happiness.

I acknowledge also, that the other Objection, drawn from these Words, *The Just shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, is not to be despised, but it concludes nothing to the purpose. For if you should cut out excellently well, some Orbs of Crystal, of different Sizes, some greater, some less, and should put them all in the Sun; they would be all full of Light in every Part; every one of them would represent the beautiful Image of that Sun that looks upon them, so that it may very well be said of them all, that they shine as the Sun. Nevertheless, according to their Brightness and Size, they receive more Light, and the Sun seems greater in the one than in the other. To the other Objection, that all the Glorified in Heaven are named Kings; I answer, that this is not to be understood in a literal Sense, no more than when 'tis said, that they had on their Heads Crowns of Gold.

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That I may continue in the ſame Compariſon, I may ſay, that as all Kings have a ſovereign Majeſty, which acknowledges none above it, but God from whom it proceeds; and nevertheleſs, ſome have a greater Power and Riches than others; Likewiſe, all the glorified Saints ſhall enjoy a ſovereign and perfect Happineſs, and receive it immediately from God; but this cannot hinder them from differing from one another in Glory. I anſwer next, the other Argument taken out of the Parable of the Father of the Family, who at the Evening of the Day rewarded equally all his Labourers that had been employed in his Vineyard, giving to every one of them a Penny: That Parables are as Pictures, in which, beſides the Thing intended to be drawn, there are many Particulars, which ſerve but as Flouriſhes to adorn the Pieces. If we ſhould conſider every Particular of this Parable, we might conclude from hence, that amongſt ſuch as ſhall be ſaved, there ſhall be ſome murmuring againſt God, who ſhall envy their Companions; which is a groſs Abſurdity to imagine. The Deſign of our Saviour is not to ſpeak of the Equality of the glorified Saints, but his Intent is to ſhew, that thoſe whom God calls firſt, ſhould not deſpiſe the others; becauſe God, who doth with his own what he pleaſeth, is able to make them equal, and to beſtow upon them the ſame Advantages. Laſtly, as every one whom the good Man of the Houſe ſent into his Vineyard at ſeveral Times of the Day, received for their Salary a Penny; in the ſame manner, whomſoever God calls into his Church effectually, at any Time, nay, at the Hour of Death, they ſhall receive from his infinite Bounty, eternal Life; but from hence we cannot conclude any Thing contrary to this Truth, That in Heaven there ſhall be divers Degrees of Glory.

The greateſt Difficulty in my Judgment, is in this Allegation, *That we ſhall ſee God Face to Face, and that he will be all in all*, 1 Cor. 13. 1 Cor. 15. Nevertheleſs we may ſay, that as all the Damned in Hell ſhall loſe

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all Sight of God, yet that cannot hinder the divers Degrees of Pain and Torment. Likewiſe, all the Glorified in Heaven ſhall ſee God; but this Sight which all enjoy, cannot remove the Inequality of their Glory and Happineſs. As when all Men look upon the ſame Sun, but ſeveral receive the Benefit of its Beams in a different Manner; thus we ſhall all behold the ſame God, but the gracious Aſpect of his Countenance ſhall be caſt upon us variouſly, and produce in us divers Effects. We may alſo make uſe of another Compariſon: As when we caſt many empty Veſſels into the ſame Sea, they are filled up; ſo that it may be ſaid of them, that the Sea is in them all. Yet ſome may be more capacious, and receive more Water than others. Likewiſe, all the Saints ſhall enter into the ſame wonderful Ocean of the God-head, they ſhall be all filled up to the Brim with his glorious Preſence; ſo that God ſhall be all in all. Nevertheleſs, they ſhall receive different Meaſures of the Waters iſſuing forth to eternal Life. In a word, as God will caſt headlong all the Reprobates into the ſame Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, and yet there ſhall be divers Degrees amongſt them of Puniſhments; ſo God ſhall cauſe all the Elect to drink out of the ſame River of Pleaſure; but there ſhall be a Difference amongſt their Degrees of Glory. Moreover, this Paſſage may be thus underſtood, *God ſhall be all in all*; that is to ſay, he ſhall be to us all Riches, Glory, Light, Meat, Drink, Pleaſure, *&c.* In my Judgment we cannot conclude from hence, that he is to be in all equally.

If any have other Thoughts, or is of another Opinion, I ſhall not offer to condemn him, nor undertake to contradict him: For I conceive, that ſince Almighty God hath hid the Glories and Happineſs of Heaven, and covered them over with a thick Cloud, on purpoſe to limit our too curious Inquiry, we cannot mention them with too much Modeſty and Reſpect. Only I muſt make another Remark for the Comfort of devout Souls, whoſe Thoughts and Minds

are

are in Heaven; that when we affirm, that there ſhall be different Degrees of Glory in Paradiſe, we muſt not fancy that this ſhall be any Prejudice to the perfect Happineſs of the Glorified. For if I may once again make uſe of the Compariſon of the Sun-beams, and of the Waters of the Sea, I cannot find any more proper for this Purpoſe. As all Eyes that look upon the clear Sun, without Cloud or Miſt, receive its Ray in a different Manner, yet they have all Light enough to ſee to guide themſelves, and to rejoice in this beautiful Light that enlightens them; if ſome take in a greater Meaſure of that Light, this hinders not the Reſt from enjoying alſo a Sufficiency: So ſhall it be with all the glorified Souls, when they ſhall behold God the Father of Lights, the true Sun that ſhall ſhine for ever and ever. If any of them ſhall have more or leſs of Light, that ſhall not concern or prejudice their ſovereign Happineſs, for every one of them ſhall enjoy as much as they ſhall be able to contain, or ſhall be neceſſary to compleat their Joy, and perfect their Happineſs. And as when we caſt into the Sea many empty Veſſels, ſome greater, ſome leſs, the greater contains more Water, and the leſſer not ſo much; yet they all receive enough to be filled up to the Brim. If the leaſt of theſe Veſſels had the Knowledge to ſpeak, they would not complain of the greater, for containing more than they, becauſe they have all as much as they can either deſire or expect. Likewiſe, when the Saints ſhall be admitted into that bottomleſs Sea of Glory and Happineſs, they ſhall be filled all up to the Brim, ſo that they ſhall not be able to deſire any more. They ſhall be all according to their different Capacities, perfectly and entirely happy. Conſider therefore, *Chriſtian Soul*, that if thou enjoyeſt ſo much Satisfaction and Delight as thou art capable of, altho' others may have ſomething more, thou art no leſs happy for their Overplus. There is none but God alone, who according to the Infiniteneſs of his Being, poſſeſſeth an unmeaſurable and infinite Glory and Happineſs.

This

This bottomless Source of Glory and Bliss, shall for ever and ever overflow all the glorified in Heaven, and satisfy their Souls with unspeakable Delights.

You may ask, *Christians*, in what Part of the great World shall God cause us to enjoy so many rare Pleasures and heavenly Contentments? Where shall he produce so many Treasures and Riches? Where will he discover so much Glory and Splendour? In what Part doth he intend to shew so many divine Marks of his gracious Presence? I answer, that this Place is above the elemental World, above all the Heavens, that appear before our Eyes, and that roll about us. If we will understand this, we must remember, that the holy Scripture makes Mention of three Heavens. The first is the large Extent of the Air, distinguished by the Learned into three Regions. In this Sense 'tis to be understood when it speaks of the Birds of the Air. The second Heaven comprehends the heavenly Spheres, the Globes, that are between the Moon and the Firmament, where are all the fixed Stars; and if beyond this there be any other Sphere, whereof the Motion is so powerful and swift, as to carry with it the inferiour Globes, and to cause them to roll round in the Space of four and twenty Hours. Of this Heaven, *David* speaks in the 19th *Psalm*, *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his Handy-work; he hath put in them a Tabernacle for the Sun.* Now above all these heavenly Spheres mentioned by the Astrologers, (some reckon up Nine or Ten, and others more;) there is yet a third Heaven spoken of by St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. *I know*, saith he, *a Man in Christ, which was taken up into the third Heaven; I know that he was taken up into Paradise, and heard Words which cannot be spoken, which are not possible for Man to utter.* The holy Apostle leaves no Manner of Difficulty; for the third Heaven he names Paradise, where he heard unspeakable Words, which are not possible to be uttered.

The celeſtial Globes roll about continually, but this third Heaven, for its Excellency, is ſtiled the Heaven, and is fixed in an eternal Settlement. And as much as theſe beautiful Orbs have a greater Light and Glory than the Air and the inferiour Bodies; ſo much the more doth this third Heaven excel them. 'Tis my Judgment, that *Solomon* means this third Heaven, ſituate above all the reſt, which exceeds them ſo much in Beauty and Glory, when he ſpeaks to God, *of the Heavens, and of the Heaven of Heavens*, 1 Kings 8. That is to ſay, the moſt excellent, the higheſt, and the moſt glorious of all the Heavens *are not able to contain thee*; and God himſelf declares, by his holy Prophet, *The Heavens are my Throne, and the Earth is my Footſtool*, Iſaiah 66. For in this high Heaven, God hath placed his Throne, where he diſcovers his Glory, and the Brightneſs of his luminous Countenance. There the Seraphims fly, and thouſand Thouſands worſhip him, and ten thouſand Millions ſtand continually before him, *Iſaiah* 6. *Dan.* 7. Here the bleſſed Soul of our Saviour Chriſt aſcended as ſoon as it had left the Body, according to what he promiſed to the crucified Thief, *Verily I ſay unto thee, this Day thou ſhalt be with me in Paradiſe*, *Luke* 23. Into this Place our glorious Saviour entred both in Soul and Body, after his Reſurrection; and here it was that St. *Stephen* ſaw him, when he cryed out, *I ſee the Heavens open, and Jeſus Chriſt ſitting at the right Hand of God*, Acts 7. And to this Place the Souls of all ſuch as die in his Favour, are carried up. Therefore St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, mentions immediately after the Thouſands of Angels, *The Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, and the Church and Congregation of the Firſt-born, whoſe Names are written in Heaven.* In ſhort, 'tis the glorious Seat, where we hope that God will receive us both in Soul and Body, at that Day, when we ſhall be taken up into the Air, above the Clouds of Heaven, to be for ever with the Lord Jeſus.

Some

Some inquire what ſhall become then of this elemental World? Whether this Heaven that appears to our Eyes, and this Earth which ſuſtains us, ſhall periſh? Or whether they ſhall remain yet after the great Day of Doom?

Certain prophane Atheiſts are perſwaded, that the World ſhall remain for ever, as it doth at preſent, and that there ſhall be no Kind of Alteration. The Apoſtle St. *Peter* hath propheſied of theſe Perſons, and deſcribed them in their own Colours; *There ſhall come at the laſt Day Mockers, walking after their own Luſts, ſaying, Where is the Promiſe of his Coming, for ſince the Fathers are aſleep, all Things continue in the ſame Manner, ſince the Beginning of the World.* I need not trouble my ſelf to anſwer ſuch Impieties: I ſpeak to none but to devout Souls, who reverence the Divinity of the holy Scriptures, and are fully perſwaded of the Truth of all the Articles of our Creed.

When Men oppoſe a falſe Doctrine, they often run from one Extremity to another. Therefore ſome imagine, that the World ſhall totally periſh; and that as God hath made the Heavens and Earth, and the Reſt of the Elements out of Nothing, he will reduce them all again into the ſame Nothing, and that he intends to create others, more beautiful, more holy, and far more glorious. There are two Sorts of Expreſſions that ſeem to favour this Opinion. The firſt ſpeaks of the Heavens and of the Earth, as of periſhing and decaying Creatures. In this manner *David* diſcourſeth of them in the 102 *Pſalm*; after him, the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*; *Thou Lord, haſt eſtabliſhed the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thy Hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; they ſhall wax old as doth a Garment, and as a Veſture ſhalt thou fold them up, and they ſhall be changed.* And our Saviour tells us in the 24th of St. *Matthew*, *The Heavens and the Earth ſhall paſs away, but my Words ſhall not paſs away.* Eſpecially, the Words of St. *Peter*, in the 2d Epiſtle, and the 3d Chapter, are remarkable. *The Heavens ſhall paſs*

away

away with a Noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with Heat, and the Earth with the Works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up. The other Paſſages mention new Heavens and a new Earth, as in the 65 of *Iſa. Behold, I create new Heavens, and a new Earth, and the former Things ſhall be remembred no more.* Likewiſe in the fore-mentioned Chapter the 3d of the 2d Epiſtle of St. *Peter, We look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, according to his Promiſe, wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs.* And in the 21ſt of Revel. *I ſaw a new Heaven and a new Earth; for the firſt Heaven and the firſt Earth were paſſed away, and there was no more Sea.* Moreover, St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks of the *World to come*; from hence ſome conclude, that the old World ought to be aboliſhed, and that God ſhall create a new World.

There is no Man that is a Chriſtian, can doubt of that wonderful Change which ſhall happen to the World at the laſt Day, if he conſiders the fore-mentioned Paſſages of holy Scripture, eſpecially that of St. *Peter, The Heavens ſhall paſs away with a Noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with Heat, and the Earth with the Works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up.* As the Walls of *Jericho* fell at the Sound of the Prieſts Trumpets; ſo this great World ſhall be turned upſide down at the Blowing of the Arch-Angel's Trumpet. Our Reaſon alone being enlightned by divine Revelations, ſeems to confirm this Truth; for ſince the Houſe infected with a ſpreading Leproſy, was to be demoliſhed, how much rather ought the World to be deſtroyed, becauſe in it is to be ſeen apparently the Spots and Blemiſhes of Sin, the ſpiritual Leproſy?

But tho' this great Fabrick of the World muſt be ruined and turned upſide down, we do not believe that it ſhall be reduc'd to Nothing. Its Qualities ſhall be changed, and it may be its Form ſhall be altered, but its Subſtance and Matter ſhall continue always the ſame. For, firſt, As God hath created the World for his own Glory, he cannot be for ever diſappointed of

the Intent of his Creation. And because this World hath not glorified him as it ought, he will put it into a Condition proper to glorifie him, answerable to the Purpose, for which he drew it out of Nothing. Secondly, since this World was created to serve Man, as a Looking-glass, to behold the eternal Power of God, and that this beautiful Looking-glass hath been spotted and sullied by Sin, 'tis yet possible to cleanse it, and make it brighter, that it might represent its Creator better, and shew forth a more perfect Image of his divine Majesty. Thirdly, since God doth nothing in vain, there is no Likelihood that he should destroy the World totally, and reduce the primitive Matter to Nothing, from whence 'tis drawn, to create new Matter, because he is able of this old Matter to make a new Earth, and new Heaven, as pure and undefiled, as if the Matter had been newly created. Fourthly, Sin hath spoiled and disfigured the Works of the Creation, but it hath not touched, neither the first Matter nor its Being; so that God can take away this Defilement, and remove the Deformity, without touching the Matter, which of it self is innocent. In Man, the little World, and the Compendium of the great, I find a beautiful and perfect Image of that which God will do with the whole World. God intends not to destroy the Substance of our Souls, but only to purge them from all vicious Qualities, and beautify them with Righteousness and true Holiness; so that they shall be as the Angels of Heaven: Likewise, he intends not to destroy the Substance of our Bodies, but he will free them from Corruption, from Death, and cloath them with Glory and Immortality; so that this vile Body shall be rendred conformable to the glorious Body of the Son of God, and shall shine as the Sun: So God will not altogether destroy the World, and abolish its Substance, but he will rectify all its Imperfections, and add to it a greater Glory. If it be lawful for me to discover here all my Thoughts; I must say, that I put a greater Difference between

Heaven

Heaven and Earth; for the Earth is altogether corrupt and ſpoiled with Sin, 'tis the Earth chiefly, that groans under the Burden of ſo many Iniquities, which reign in it; but if Heaven is guilty of any Crime, it is becauſe it hath given Light to ſuch as have been Rebels againſt the divine Majeſty, and aſſiſted the curſed Earth by its favourable Influences. Becauſe of this great Difference, 'tis my Opinion, that the Earth ſhall be deſtroyed by Fire, and that all its beautiful Buildings and proud Palaces ſhall be turned into Aſhes. But the Change which ſhall happen in Heaven, ſhall only be to make it more beautiful and brighter, that the Children of God may have there a more glorious Palace. This ſeems to have been typified in the ceremonial Law; for as we have already obſerved, ſpeaking of that which ſhall happen to the Soul and Body, that when an earthern Veſſel was defiled, it was to be broken to Pieces, but ſuch Veſſels, as were of a more precious Metal, as of Braſs, of Silver, or of Gold, were to be purified with Fire: Likewiſe, the Earth, with all its Works ſhall paſs through the Flames, ſo that it ſhall loſe its preſent Shape and Qualities. But Heaven, that is as Braſs, or rather as fine Silver, ſhall only be purified by the Fire of the laſt Judgment. If you remove the Cauſe, you take away alſo the Effect; if you remove away Sin, you alſo remove its Puniſhment. Now 'tis, becauſe of Man's Sin, that the World hath, and ſhall ſee ſo great a Change. Therefore, as God, by his infinite Mercy, hath forgiven Man's Sin, 'tis alſo to be expected from the ſame Mercy, that he will not totally deſtroy the World, but that he will rather free it from Corruption, unto which our Sins had made it ſubject.

Unleſs God deals in this Manner, our Joy and Comfort ſeems not compleat, and God appears not perfectly ſatisfied and reconcil'd. While a Subject continues in Rebellion, and in the Diſpleaſure of his Prince; not only his Perſon is purſued and puniſhed, but all that belongs to him bears the Marks of Wrath

and Indignation of the Prince whom he hath offended. His Dwelling-House is commonly pulled down, his Woods are cut and mangled, and his Inheritance is destroyed. But when he hath made his Peace, his Houses are built up again, all Signs of the King's Displeasure are taken away, and every Thing appears with a more pleasant Countenance: Thus, because of our Rebellion and our Treason against God, he hath punished the World for our sakes, and hath made it sensible of his Wrath. But now that our Peace is made; or rather, God having made Peace by the Blood of his Son, we may justly expect that he will remove all signs of his Displeasure and Revenge. I remember upon this Subject, what *David* saith to God, when he saw the Angel destroying *Jerusalem*, *I have sinned, and I have done wickedly, but these Sheep, what have they done?* 2 Sam. 24. In the same Manner every Believer may say to God, Lo, I have sinned, O Lord, I and my Brethren have done wickedly, but these inanimate Creatures, what have they done? Our Sins have defiled the Earth; and all that may be objected against Heaven, is, to have yielded Light and Assistance to us Rebels. Since therefore thou hast blotted out our Sins, and pardoned our Rebellions, spare these harmless Creatures, which cannot be punished but for our sakes.

At present we may without Difficulty understand the forementioned Passages of holy Scripture, and such as tend to the same Purpose. For when *David* and St. *Paul* assure us, *That the Heavens shall perish, that they shall be changed as a Garment*; I answer, that they shall perish in respect of their Qualities, and not of their Substance; and that the Change shall not be, as when one Garment is cast off and another is taken; but as when the Spots and Blemishes of an old Garment are taken away and it becomes fresher. When your Cloathing is grown old and worn out, if it were in your Power to make it become new again, and as beautiful as ever it was, you would never think of seeking for new Stuff. That which is impossible to

Men,

Men, is poſſible with God, *Luke* 6. And when our Saviour in St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel ſaith, *That the Heavens and the Earth ſhall paſs away, but my Words ſhall not paſs away*; I might affirm, that theſe Words are to be underſtood comparatively, that is to ſay, that the Heavens and the Earth ſhall paſs away, rather than that the Words of God ſhould fail of an Accompliſhment. Our Saviour confirms this Interpretation, when he ſaith in St. *Luke*'s Goſpel, *'Tis eaſier for Heaven and Earth to paſs away; than that one Tittle of the Law ſhould not be fulfilled.* The holy Scripture is full of ſuch Kind of Expreſſions, but I would rather ſtick to the Anſwers which I have already given to the former Texts, and ſay, that the Heavens and the Earth ſhall paſs away, not in regard of their Subſtances, but only in regard of their Qualities and Accidents that belong to them.

In St. *Peter*'s Expreſſions, I find a double Compariſon or Alluſion; the one relates to the Tents that are pulled down, when the Pieces are taken aſunder. This Compariſon is very proper; for this World is like a great Tabernacle, a glorious Pavilion. God ſhall pull off all the Coverings, he ſhall cut the Cords, and ſeparate every Piece. But he will one Day raiſe it up again, gather every Piece, and make it a royal Tabernacle, full of Splendour and Glory.

The other Compariſon is borrowed from Goldſmiths, who caſt the Gold and Metals into Pots, and then melt them in the Fire. Now as they deſtroy not, by this Means, the Gold and the Silver, but they cleanſe them from the Droſs and Froth, cauſe them to appear in all their Brightneſs and Beauty, and give them a new Shape and Form: So the Fire of the laſt Judgment, ſhall not conſume the Heavens and the Earth, but ſhall only give them a new Form and Beauty.

The ſtrongeſt Objection, in my Opinion, is occaſioned by the Words of St. *Peter*, *The Earth and the Works that are therein, ſhall be burnt:* But I anſwer to

this, that there is a great Difference between burning, and being totally consumed and abolished. If it were in the Power of a Man, whose House is consum'd to the Ground, to raise it up again from its Ruins, and to make it more beautiful and glorious than before, by his Word alone, he would never seek for other Materials. Now shall I say again, that what is impossible with Men, is possible with God. He hath already created the World by his Word, and he is able to restore it again by the same Word. Art hath found a Means to make beautiful Vessels of melted Ashes, and shall not God's Hand, unto which all the Skill of Art, and the Strength of Nature cannot be compared, be able to gather up the Ashes of this Earth, and to make of it a Body full of Glory and Light?

From hence you may perceive, how we are to understand, that there shall be new Heavens and a new Earth; they shall not be new in regard of their Substance and Matter, which shall have been from the Beginning of the World; but they shall be new in regard of those noble Qualities which God shall give them. When a debaucht Fellow leaves his wicked Life, and applies himself to the Practice of Piety and Vertue, we commonly say, that he is not the same, but that he is become another Man. Besides, when a Man hath cast off his old Rags, and puts on a magnificent Garment, we are wont to say, that he is another Man. We shall have much more Cause to declare, that the Heavens and the Earth shall be new, when God shall have renewed them. In short, he shall enrich the World with so many wonderful Beauties, he shall fill it full of so much Glory and Excellency, he shall cause it to be so perfect, that we shall have just Reason to look upon it, as upon a new World, and to say with the Apostle, *The old Things are past away, behold all Things are become new.* I would not have you think, *Christians*, that this Opinion is grounded only upon human Reason: 'tis drawn from the Words of St. *Paul*, who speaking of the earthly and insensible Creatures,

Creatures, as may appear by his Deſign; he ſaith not only *that they are ſubject to Vanity, not willingly, but becauſe of him who hath ſubjected them*; he underſtands Man, who by his Sin and Rebellion hath ſpoiled the World, and corrupted Nature; but he adds immediately after, *That they hope to be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, to be in the glorious Liberty of the Children of God*; afterwards he ſaith, *For we know that the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth in Pain together until now*; and before he ſaith, *That the earneſt Expectation of the Creature, waiteth for the Manifeſtation of the Sons of God.* In which Words, pray take Notice, that St. *Paul* ſaith not that theſe Creatures ſhall be aboliſhed and totally deſtroyed, but only, that they ſhall be delivered from Vanity, and from the Bondage of Corruption, unto which the Sin of Man hath made them ſubject; and that this bleſſed Deliverance ſhall be brought to paſs at the Day of the Redemption of our Bodies, that is to ſay, at that Day when God ſhall redeem our Bodies from their Graves, and raiſe them up to the higheſt Glory and Happineſs, which hath been prepared for us from the Creation of the World.

Then ſhall happen that which is wont to be ſeen at the Marriage of a great King, or at a Coronation, or a Triumph. For not only the Prince and his Spouſe, and all their Court, appear in their richeſt and moſt glorious Attire, and loaden with their moſt precious Jewels; and the uſual Pomp of Triumphs, was as extraordinary and glorious as could be contriv'd: But on ſuch Occaſions, the Prince's Palace is adorned with the richeſt, with the moſt magnificent and rareſt Ornaments; and the Town where this Solemnity is kept, ſhews forth ſome Signs of the publick Rejoicing. Many Places are beautified with ſeveral Rarities, Theatres are erected and triumphal Arches, the Streets are covered with Flowers and Tapiſtry, Fires are kindled, and Torches are lighted; and there is no Corner but ſhews ſome Expreſſions of the publick

Joy. Thus when our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall come down from the Clouds of Heaven, upon a Chariot of Triumph, when he ſhall come to conſummate his Marriage with, and to crown his Spouſe, he ſhall not only appear in his greateſt Glory, and moſt divine Pomp, but the Church alſo his Spouſe ſhall be cloathed with a Garment brighter than the Sun, and crowned with an immortal Glory. All the bleſſed Saints ſhall appear in their Attire of Joy, having Palms in their Hands, and Crowns upon their Heads, and the Companies of holy Angels ſhall ſing round about. At that Time Paradiſe, which ſhall be his Palace and Bride-Chamber, ſhall be adorned and enriched with all the Light and Glory which I have already eſſayed to deſcribe to you. The whole World alſo, and every Part of it, ſhall partake of this great Glory, and celeſtial Pomp. The richeſt Coronations, the moſt magnificent Triumphs, the moſt ſtately Nuptials are gone in a few Hours. Therefore the Fires of Joy are ſoon put out, the Hangings of the Streets are taken down, and the Arches and Pageants diſappear, and the City is to be ſeen in its wonted Dreſs. But as this Glory and Joy of the Church ſhall never end; therefore the World ſhall for ever and ever bear the Signs of it. The Ornaments which it ſhall receive in this joyful Day, ſhall never be taken away, and the celeſtial Fires of Gladneſs ſhall never go out.

Altho' 'tis my Opinion, that the World ſhall never be totally deſtroyed, but that it ſhall become more beautiful and glorious than before, I ſhall not undertake to give you a Deſcription of its ſeveral Parts, nor to tell you how it ſhall be employed. For example, I ſhall not determine whether we are to underſtand our Saviour's Words in the Goſpel, literally, *That the Sun ſhall become Dark, and the Moon ſhall not give its Light, and that the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven*; or whether theſe heavenly Bodies ſhall ſtill continue; whether they ſhall be decked with a new Light and Glory, and to what Purpoſe they ſhall ſerve. For

then

then we ſhall be enlightned with a greater Light than that of all the heavenly Bodies. I ſhall only propoſe two Things: *Firſt*, That as in the human Bodies there are ſome Members which at preſent are uſeful, but then they ſhall only be for Ornament and Beauty: Likewiſe, in the great World, there are many needful Things which ſhall then be of no Uſe; nevertheleſs, they ſhall be preſerved for the Beauty and Perfection of the World. *Secondly*, That as Man, the little World, ſhall then be more beautiful and perfect than when God firſt created him; likewiſe, this great World ſhall receive more Beauty, more Ornaments and Perfection, than when God drew it out of its firſt Chaos. As much Difference as there is between the ſecond *Adam* and the firſt, between the heavenly Paradiſe and the earthly; ſo much there ſhall be between the firſt and the ſecond World. So that we ſhall have good Cauſe to ſay of this great Palace, which is to be deſtroyed, and reared up again by the mighty Hand of God, as the holy Prophets ſaid of *Solomon*'s Temple, which we have already applied to our glorified Bodies, *The Glory of this ſecond Houſe, ſhall be greater than the Glory of the firſt.*

Some enquire whether we ſhall know one another in this State of eternal Glory and Happineſs? I mean, whether the Subject ſhall know his Prince and King? Whether the Sheep ſhall know their Paſtor, and the Paſtor his Sheep? Whether the Father ſhall know his Son, the Son the Father, the Husband his Wife, and the Wife her Husband, and ſo forth?

Tho' this Queſtion is of the Number of ſuch as are more curious, than needful to be known; nevertheleſs, an Anſwer ſeems to carry with it ſome Kind of Comfort and Satisfaction. I ſhould judge that this Treatiſe ſhould not be perfect; if I did not ſay ſomething to this noble Subject, but what I ſhall ſay, ſhall be with the ſame Moderation and Reſervedneſs, as I have expreſſed in anſwering to the former Queſtions. For altho' what I ſhall ſpeak, ſeems to me very plain

and

and without Difficulty, others may have a different Opinion, without any Prejudice to their Salvation. However, I may affirm for an infallible Truth, that the Glory of Heaven, as well as Grace, shall bring Nature to Perfection, but shall not destroy it. It shall add to it other Excellencies, but shall not take away those that it hath already. It shall not abolish any of the Faculties, but it shall beautify and enrich them with new Ornaments. Therefore consequently, it shall not take away our Memory, which is one of the rarest Gifts and Abilities of the reasonable Soul.

I confess that 'tis said, *That the former Things shall be remembred no more, and that they shall come no more into our Mind.* But this is to be understood of the Evils and Calamities of this present Life: And we are not to understand the Words so, that we shall totally forget all the former Evils and Miseries, and shall not remember to have suffer'd them; St. *John* saith the contrary, when he represents the Angel opening the fifth Seal, that he saw under the golden Altar, which was before the Throne of God, the Souls of them who had been martyred for the Word of God, and for the Testimony of the Truth, crying out with a loud Voice, *How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and revenge our Blood upon the Inhabitants of the Earth?* I confess, these Words may be understood in a figurative Sense, as when God said to *Cain*, *The Voice of thy Brother's Blood cries from the Earth unto me*; and as St. *Paul* saith, *That the Blood of Jesus Christ speaks better Things, than the Blood of Abel.* However, from hence we may conclude, that the Remembrance of the Calamities and Persecutions that we have endured in this Life, is not inconsistent with Happiness. This Remembrance is so far from prejudicing our Felicity, that, on the contrary, it shall increase and inlarge it, and cause us to relish it the more. When the Prophet saith, *That the former Things shall be remembred no more, that they shall never come to Mind*; he understands that the former Evils shall never be felt, and that we shall

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be for ever ſheltered from all Miſery and Misfortunes.

I cannot expreſs this by a nobler and more proper Example, than that of *Joſeph*, when he went out of Priſon to take the Government of *Egypt*, and had ſtrengthened himſelf, by a rich Alliance in Marriage, he named his eldeſt Son *Manaſſeh*, which ſignifies, *Forgetfulneſs, or forgetful*; *for he ſaid, God hath made me forget all my Labour, and my Father's Houſe.* Altho' this holy Man had not altogether forgotten thoſe Things, for he knew afterwards his Brethren, and told them of the Miſchief which they had intended againſt him, and which God had turned to Good. But he ſpoke in this Manner, becauſe God had changed his Miſery and Impriſonment into Glory and Honour. In this Senſe we are to underſtand theſe Words, *The former Things ſhall be remembred no more*; becauſe inſtead of the Evils and Miſeries which we endure here below, we ſhall enter into an eternal Glory and Happineſs. The Prophet expounds himſelf ſufficiently in the next Words; for when he had ſaid, *The former Things ſhall not be remembred, nor come into Mind*, he adds immediately after, *Be you glad and rejoice in that which I create.* The holy Ghoſt confirms us in this Interpretation in another Place, by theſe Words, *All Tears ſhall be wiped off from our Eyes, there ſhall be no more Sorrow, nor Crying, nor Pain, but eternal Joy and Gladneſs ſhall be upon our Heads.*

Since God intends not to deſtroy theſe Gifts and Abilities which he hath beſtowed upon us in this Life, much leſs ſhall he aboliſh our Knowledge, which is one of the brighteſt Beams of Glory. This Knowledge ſhall be ſo far from diminiſhing or decaying, that it ſhall then increaſe more and more, until it comes to the higheſt Perfection. As the Air loſeth nothing of its Twilight at Break of Day, when the Sun riſeth upon our Heads, but rather loſeth all Obſcurity and Darkneſs, which the Preſence of the Sun drives away, until it be perfectly enlightned; likewiſe, our Underſtanding ſhall loſe nothing of that Light and Perfection,

fection, which it receives now from the breaking of the Day of God's Grace. But as the Sun of Righteousness riseth upon it more and more in Joy and Salvation, it shall perfectly lose all Darkness and Ignorance by Degrees, until it be fully enlightned. From hence we may probably conclude, that we shall know all the Persons in Heaven, whom we have known here below on Earth. For if the glorified shall remember the Wicked, who have tormented them, they must needs remember all Believers who have bestowed upon them their Alms, and done them Good. If it were otherwise, the Apostle St. *Paul* would not tell the *Corinthians*; *We are your Glory, as also you are ours at the Day of the Lord Jesus*; And he would not write thus to the *Thessalonians*; *What is our Hope, our Joy, and our Crown of Glory? Is it not you before the Lord Jesus Christ at his Coming? Verily you are our Glory and our Joy.* Now, if in the State of Glory, St. *Paul* should not know the *Corinthians* and *Thessalonians*, unto whom he had preached the Gospel, how shall they be his Joy, his Glory, and his Crown at the Coming of the Lord Jesus? This Reason seems to me as clear as the Sun. Nevertheless, I cannot affirm, that in Heaven we shall know again them whom we have known upon Earth by the Features of their Countenance, for there shall be a wonderful Alteration. The Faces of all the Saints shall be so beautiful, so perfect, and full of Light and Glory, that the most knowing shall not be able to judge them to be the same whom we have seen upon Earth. Some therefore fancy, that we shall know one another by the Assistance of our Discourse; but our Voice shall then be changed as well as our Countenance, and 'tis doubtful whether we shall discourse of the former Things which happened on Earth; for our chief Employment shall be to behold God's Face, and to sing forth his Praises. I had rather therefore affirm, that we shall know one another by an infused Knowledge, by which we shall know all Things which are possible to be known, and by the Light of that Glory with which

which God ſhall fill our Souls. In ſhort, this Knowledge ſhall proceed from no other Principle, than that of all the Knowledges with which we ſhall be crown'd in that State of Glory and Perfection.

I am therefore more than fully perſwaded, that we ſhall know in Heaven our Parents and our Friends, and generally all the Perſons whom we have known here below: But we ſhall alſo perfectly know them whom we never knew in the World, and never ſaw with the Eyes of the Fleſh. We ſhall know the holy and bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apoſtles, the Evangeliſts, the Confeſſors, the Martyrs, and generally, without Exception, all the Saints, who ſhall be crowned with Glory and Joy in Heaven. There is no Body can queſtion, but that in the celeſtial Paradiſe, we ſhall have more Knowledge and Underſtanding, than ever *Adam* had in the earthly. Now when God cauſed a deep Sleep to fall upon him, when he took one of his Ribs, and formed therewith a Woman, he had ſeen none of this done; nevertheleſs, when his Eyes were open, he knew her, therefore he declared his Judgment in this manner, *This is Bone of my Bone, and Fleſh of my Fleſh.* And ſhall not we, when God ſhall rouze us up from the deep Sleep of Death, with the Sound of the laſt Trumpet, know the Spouſe of the Son of God, which he hath drawn out of his Side, and molded with his own precious Blood? St. *Peter*, when he was enlightned by a Beam of our Saviour's Glory in his Transfiguration, knew *Moſes* and *Elias* whom he had never ſeen before. And ſhall not we know all the Children of God upon Mount *Sion*, when we ſhall be transfigured our ſelves, and that we ſhall all ſhine as the heavenly Light, whereof that of Mount *Tabor* was but an imperfect Shadow and Repreſentation? But tho' we ſhall know in Heaven all the Perſons whom we have known on Earth, we ſhall look upon them in another Manner, and love them with another Affection, for all that we have of the animal and earthly Life, ſhall be totally aboliſhed; and as our

Knowledge

Knowledge shall be clear and certain, our Love shall be pure and heavenly. I am not able to express this better than St. *Paul* doth, in these Words, *Although I have known Christ according to the Flesh, nevertheless, I know him no more according to the Flesh. Christians*, consider well these Expressions, they will be able to remove all Difficulty and Doubts out of your Minds. We are fully persuaded, that all the Inhabitants of Heaven, shall know very well our Lord Jesus Christ: For how can it be otherwise, but that we must know this glorious Monarch of Men and of Angels, whose sacred Countenance shall shine as the Sun, and who shall sit upon his magnificent Throne, about which Legions of *Seraphims* fly, and who shall be there adored for ever, by all the Church of Glory? Nevertheless, St. *Paul* saith, *That although he hath known Jesus Christ according to the flesh*; that is to say, according to the Manner of this low and earthly Life, when he lived here on Earth; at present he did not know him in the same Manner, he did not consider him otherwise, but as he is at present invested with an unspeakable Glory and Splendor. In the same Manner, altho' we shall know all them whom we have known on Earth, we shall no more know them according to the Flesh, that is to say, according to this animal and sensual Life; our Love shall have nothing of earthly or carnal, but it shall be altogether spiritual and heavenly.

I beseech you, Christians, consider well what St. *Mat.* tells us in Chap. 22. The *Sadducees*, who say that there is no Resurrection, came to Christ to intangle him with this difficult Question, *Master*, Moses *said, If a Man die having no Children, his Brother shall marry his Wife, and raise up Seed unto his Brother. Now there were with us seven Brethren; and the first when he had married a Wife deceased, and having no Issue, left his Wife unto his Brother; likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh; and last of all the Woman died also; therefore, in the Resurrection whose Wife shall she be of the seven; for they all had her?* Our Saviour

answers

anſwers not that this Woman ſhall belong to none of thoſe Husbands, becauſe they ſhall not know her, nor diſtinguiſh her from other Women; but he replies to them, *You err, not knowing the Scripture, nor the Power of God; for in the Reſurrection they neither marry, nor are given in Marriage, but are as the Angels of God in Heaven.* From hence we may conclude, that altho' in Heaven we ſhall know one another, we ſhall have nothing of that carnal Love, which we have at preſent, and which cauſeth us to put ſo much Difference between one Perſon and another. A Father may know his Children, but his Love ſhall not be grounded upon Conſiderations of Fleſh and Blood; he ſhall love them only, becauſe they are amongſt the Children of God, and the Heirs of the Kingdom, and becauſe he ſhall ſee them appear in the Image of the Heavenly Father, cloathed with his Light, and crowned with his immortal Glory. Finally, we ſhall Love no Body but in God, and for his ſake, as they ſhall be in God and God in them. In this manner it ſhall not be poſſible to love them more or leſs. Charity, or Love, the Queen of Vertues, ſhall then ſit upon its Throne, and attain to its higheſt Degree and Perfection.

If you think ſeriouſly upon this, *Chriſtians*, you ſhall eaſily find Arguments to anſwer the vain Objections of ſuch as ſay, that if we come to the Knowledge of one another in Heaven, that will be able to diſturb our Satisfaction. For as 'tis a Comfort and Joy to meet there with our Parents and Friends; in like manner it will be a Trouble and Affliction, not to find there all ſuch whom we have formerly loved. We may form and retort the ſame Objection with more Reaſon, againſt thoſe who believe that we ſhall not know one another in Heaven. For we may ſay alſo, that not knowing the Perſons, we ſhall not know whether our Parents or our Friends are there; and that this is likely to diſturb and trouble the Quiet and

Satisfaction

Satisfaction of our Minds. But to argue in this groſs manner, is to confound Heaven with the Earth.

Grief and Diſpleaſure can never be admitted in a Paradiſe of Joy and perfect Happineſs. In this glorious Condition, our Knowledge ſhall be ſo clear, our Charity ſo pure, our Love to God ſo fervent, that as we ſhall love all things which God ſhall love, and where his Image ſhall appear; ſo it ſhall not be poſſible for us to love them whom God ſhall hate, them who ſhall bear the Marks and Characters of the Devil.

When *David* was yet here on Earth, he ſaid unto God, *Lord, ſhall I not hate them that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect Hatred, they have been to me as mine Enemies*, Pſal. 39. In the ſame manner we ſhall rather ſpeak in Heaven, in the State of Perfection, when God ſhall be in us all in all, and we ſhall be all in God. Some there are that inquire what Kind of Language we ſhall ſpeak in Heaven? Some reply, that we ſhall ſpeak the Language of Angels, grounding their Opinion upon what St. *Paul* ſpeaks to the *Corinthians*; *When I ſhall ſpeak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, if I have not Charity, I am become as ſounding Braſs, and a tinkling Cymbal.*

But this is a fantaſtical Opinion; for as the Angels are pure Spirits, they can have no Tongue, nor proper Language. I confeſs, in ſome holy Apparitions, Angels have ſpoken to Men, but it was by moving the Tongues of their borrowed Bodies, or by employing ſome other corporeal Organ. Then they ſpoke in the Language of thoſe to whom they were ſent, and had no particular or proper Dialect. But if Angels did ſpeak, their Language would excel as much that of Men, as the angelical Nature excels the humane. By the Tongues of Angels therefore our Apoſtle underſtands an excellent Tongue, better than that of Men.

Others fancy, that in Heaven we ſhall ſpeak no other Language but the *Hebrew*, becauſe, ſay they, that 'tis the

the Tongue which God hath ſanctified from the Beginning of the World, in which he ſpoke to the Patriarchs and holy Prophets, in which he proclaim'd his Law upon Mount *Sinai*, in the Audience of all the People of *Iſrael*, and in which he hath recorded his ſacred Law with his own Finger. They ſay, that 'tis the Language which *Adam* ſpoke in the Earthly Paradiſe, in the State of Innocency, and which all the Inhabitants of the World made uſe of before God ſent among them a Diviſion of Tongues. And we may alſo affirm, that 'twas the Language uſed by our Saviour while he was on Earth. For the *Syriack*, that he commonly ſpoke as the reſt of the *Jews*, is a Dialect of the *Hebrew*, or a Kind of corrupted *Hebrew*. Others are yet of Opinion, that as then we ſhall attain to all the Knowledge and Sciences, we ſhall not be ignorant of all Kind of Languages, but that we ſhall ſpeak them all in a moſt perfect manner, and that with them we ſhall declare the wonderful Works of God, as the Apoſtles at the Day of *Pentecoſt*. As the Holy Scripture is ſilent upon the Matter, I ſhall affirm nothing.

But in general Terms, I may declare, that as God cauſed a Diviſion of Tongues to puniſh Man's Inſolence and Pride, and as the different Languages of People, is an Effect of their Sin, 'tis more certain, that this Confuſion and Difference ſhall be altogether taken away, and that nothing ſhall be ſaid in Heaven, but ſhall be very well underſtood by all the glorified Saints. I may add, moreover, that in caſe we ſhould ſpeak ſo well all Manner of Languages, which have been in the World, 'tis nevertheleſs very likely, that we ſhall all ſpeak but one Language, that we may all praiſe God with the ſame Voice. But whether this ſhall be the holy Language, or another more perfect and majeſtick, which God ſhall ſanctify for this Purpoſe, we cannot know until God of his infinite Mercy ſhall have raiſed us to this State of Glory and Perfect Happineſs. From what we have already ſaid, *Chriſtians*, you may eaſily underſtand, that our Happineſs hath three Steps or Degrees; the firſt is attainable in this Life, the ſecond at the Egreſs of the Soul out of the Body, the third is at the great Day of our glorious Reſurrection. For already in this Life, God beſtows upon us the Firſt-Fruits of his Glory, and the Fore-taſts of his Paradiſe. The Spirit of God, and of his Glory, reſts at preſent upon us, which fills us full of an unſpeakable glorious Joy, and with the Peace of God, which paſſeth all Underſtanding. When our Souls depart out of this wretched and infirm Body, God gathers them up into the Bundle of Life; he introduceth them into the Bleſſed Company of the Angels and Glorified Spirits, and admits them to the Contemplation of his Face, which is Fulneſs of Joy. But in this Day of Triumph, when Chriſt ſhall come down from Heaven to judge the quick and the dead, he will advance us both in Soul and Body to the higheſt Glory and Happineſs whereof we are capable.

For this Reason the Name of Glory is ascribed to this high degree of Happiness, which is promised to us at the Blessed Appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ in the 8 Chap. to the *Romans*, where the Apostle saith, *That the Creature was made subject to Vanity, not willingly, but by Reason of him who hath subjected the same, in hope; because the Creature it self shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the Glorious liberty of the Children of God.* And in the 3 Chap. to the *Colos.* *he saith, You are Dead and your Life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ who is your Life shall appear, you shall appear also with him in Glory.* Therefore this Glorious Appearing is stiled *A Blessed Hope*, that is to say, the Fulfillings and Accomplishment of all that we expect or hope for; as in the 2 Chap. to *Tit.* St. *Paul* saith, *We expect the Blessed Hope, the appearing of the Glory of our great God, who is the Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Then shall be the Consummation of the Glory, Head and Members; for then the Son of God shall cause the damned to feel that Almighty Power, which he Possesseth in Heaven and Earth, and in the Depths. He shall discover himself to the Faithful, in his greatest Glory and most Divine Splendour. Therefore this Glorious Day of his Descent from Heaven, with the Angels of his Power, is mentioned as the first Day of his *Manifestation*, of his *Appearing*, and of his *Kingdom*. For this cause, when the Holy Ghost speaks of this Day, it stiles it, *The Day of our Lord Jesus Christ*, or *the Day of our Lord Jesus*, as also *the Day of the Lord*, and *the day of God.* As it shall be the Day of the Lord Jesus, it shall also be our Day. Therefore St. *Paul* calls it, *The Day of our Redemption*, because that in this Day, our Lord shall redeem our Bodies out of their Graves, and shall bestow upon both, our Souls and Bodies, *Eph.* 4. all the Fruits of that Redemption, which he hath purchased for us with his Blood, *Rom.* 8. and shall raise us up to the highest Glory and most perfect Happiness, *Heb.* 9. 'Tis the happy Day of Consummation of our Marriage with the Divine Lamb. 'Tis the Day of our Joy and Triumph with the glorified Men and Angels 'Tis the Day of our Coronation, and of our entrance into our Kingdom, when the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords shall Crown us with his own Hand, and put us in Possession of an Empire prepared for us in the beginning of the World. In a word, 'tis the Day when we shall come to the Lord Jesus, and be with him, he is with the Father, that we may be all in one.

Because of the glorious and wonderful things that shall come to pass on this Day, 'tis named *The great Day.* St. *Jude* calls it thus, when he speaks of the revolted Angels, he saith, *That God hath reserved them in everlasting Chains under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day.* In this manner many understand the Words of *John* when he describes the foul Spirits, and likens them

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to Frogs, that he ſaw coming out of the Dragon's Mouth, and of the Beaſt, and out of the Mouth of the Falſe Prophet, and ſaith, *They are the Spirits of the Devil working Miracles, which God ſent forth unto the Kings of the Earth, and of the whole World, to gather them to the Battle of that great day of God Almighty*, Revel. 16.

Laſtly, This glorious Day is not only called *The day of Judgment, the Day of the Lord, the Day of our Redemption, and the Great Day*, but oft times, without any Addition, is ſtil'd *The Day, and That Day, as Hebrews* 10. *Let us conſider one another to provoke unto Love and good Works; not forſaking the aſſembling our ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is, but exhorting one another, and ſo much the more as ye ſee the Day approaching.* In the Epiſt. to the *Theſſalonians, You are not in Darkneſs, that That Day ſhould ſurprize you.* Thus in the 2 Epiſt. to *Tim.* and firſt Chap. St. *Paul* ſaith, *I know whom I have believed, and I am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt That Day.* And when he remembers the good and charitable Deeds of *Oneſiphorus*, he prays for him in this manner, *The Lord grant unto him, that he may find Mercy of the Lord in That Day*; and in the 4 Chap. ſpeaking of himſelf, he ſaith, *I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſh'd my Courſe, I have kept the Faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day.*

'Tis ſo ſtiled, becauſe of its Excellency, 'tis the Day of Days, the end of all the Seaſons, the Conſummation of all Ages and Times; after this there ſhall be no more Alteration of Days, Months, and Years. Therefore an Angel is repreſented in the *Revel.* lifting up his Hand to heaven, ſwearing by the living God, who hath created Heaven, and all things therein, the Earth and all things in it, and the Sea, and the things that are there. That there ſhall be no more Time. For inſtead of this unconſtant Time which flies away, without leaving any Sign of its being, an everlaſting Eternity, ſhall ſucceed, an Eternity always the ſame, always Bleſſed with Happineſs, always glorious and Joyful. This Divine and Magnificent Day ſhall begin at the end of other Days, but ſhall never draw to an end. Therefore St. *Peter*, in theſe Words, calls it an Eternal Day or Eternity, 2 *Pet.* 3. *Glory be to the Lord, and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, both now and for ever*, Amen. And in expectation of this Day of Days, all Creatures are groaning and travelling in Pain until now; but eſpecially Believers, who have the Firſt-Fruits of the Spirit, groan in themſelves, deſiring with an earneſt and Holy Deſire to ſee the breaking of the great and glorious Day. 'Tis the end of all the Prophecies, and the Accompliſhment of all God's gracious Promiſes to his People in all the Ages of the World; 'tis the end and Reward of our Spiritual Calling, and fulfilling of all our Deſires and Expectations the crowning of all our Labours, and the higheſt ſtep of that Glory and Happineſs, unto which we pretend.

You devout Souls, that delight in the Contemplation of celestial Things, I pray consider with me, the Accomplishment and the Perfection of three Kinds of Works, which have been succeeded by their several Rests. The first was that of the Creation of the World; for in six Days God created the Heaven and the Earth, and all Things in them, and when he had finish'd his Works, and found that they were good and perfect, he rested the seventh Day *Gen.* 1. and 2. Therefore he blessed and sanctified it. The second great Work was that of Redemption; for when our Saviour had fulfilled all the Prophecies which mentioned him; when he had caused the Meaning of all the ancient Types and Figures to appear in his Person and Sufferings; when he had fully satisfied the Justice of God, and purchas'd for us with his Blood an Eternal Redemption, he cried out, *all is finish'd*, John 19. and he bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghost. After this, Christ had nothing more to do, nor to suffer, but he is gone into Heaven to rest from all his Works, *Revel.* 5. and to take Possession of all Power, Riches, Wisdom, Strength, Honour, Glory, and Praise. The third Work is that of our Glorification, when we shall see new Heavens appear, and a new Earth, when our Bodies shall be cloathed with Incorruption and Immortality, and united again to our Souls, and when in both Soul, and Body we shall attain to the highest Glory, and most perfect Happiness; then he that sits upon the Throne of Eternity shall say with a loud Voice, *Revel.* 21. *All is finished.*

Afterwards the Sabbath of Sabbaths shall succeed that eternal Rest, and that Peace which shall never be interrupted by any Unhappiness. We may say, that the first Rest is that of God the Father, the second belongs to the Son, the third is the Rest of the Holy Ghost, that shall have then gather'd all the Saints together, reared up the House of God to the Roof, and perfectly enlightned and sanctified the Catholick Church, from whence shall proceed its eternal Glory and Happiness: Or rather, we may say, that this last Rest is the Rest of all the three Persons of the most holy and most glorious Trinity, for then they shall rest from all Manner of Works for ever and ever, and we in the Bosom of their Glory, we shall also enjoy an everlasting Rest. When the Works of Creation were finish'd, the Works of Redemption were next expected, and after the Works of Redemption, we hope for the Works of our final Glorification. But when God shall have brought us all into his glorious Rest, and that he shall have declared for the third time from Heaven, *All is finished*; we shall then expect nothing, neither from God's Justice, nor from his Mercy, for all God's Enemies shall be then destroyed, and it shall not be possible to add any Thing to the Infamy of their Punishments, nor to the Violence of their Torments. There shall be no more Tears to be wiped, no more Evils to be fear'd, nor Advantages to be expected, nor Crowns to receive, for then all the Children of God shall be perfectly glorified. They shall enjoy God himself, who shall be their Inheritance,

for

for ever, and the bottomleſs Fountain of all their Delights, ſo that it ſhall not be poſſible to add any Thing to their infinite Glory, nor to their Eternal Happineſs. God ſhall then, if I may ſo ſpeak, take away all Means of expreſſing any greater Liberality and Bounty.

Abraham leaped for Joy, when he ſaw the Birth-day and Humiliation of the Son of God; how ſhould we rejoyce and be tranſported out of our ſelves, when we think upon this glorious Day of the appearing of our great God and Saviour? When with the Eye of Faith we behold him ſitting upon the Clouds of Heaven, coming to put a Period to Sin and Death, to ſhut up the Devil and his Angels in the bottomleſs Pit of Hell, to deliver his Church from all Evils, Enemies, and Dangers and to promote it to the higheſt Felicity, and to an Everlaſting Glory?

After this, Believing Souls, I muſt draw the Curtain, and ſuffer my Pen to fall from my Hand, for mine Eyes dazle at the Sight of ſo ſhining a Light, and My Soul is ſurprized at the Conſideration of ſo much Glory and ſo perfect an Happineſs.

Altho' I have lengthen'd this Treatiſe more than I at firſt propos'd to my ſelf, I muſt needs confeſs, that whatſoever I have ſaid upon ſo rich and glorious a Subject, falls far ſhort of the Truth. But I am perſwaded, that there will be here enough, for Pious and Devout Souls who ſeek not for the Ornament of Language, nor for the Flourishes of Rhetorick, but for the true and ſolid Comforts of God's holy Word. You Chriſtian and believing Souls, for whoſe Sake I have undertaken this Work, I intreat you for the Glory of God, and for your own Salvation, to preſerve in your Minds the Ideas of theſe Things that I have now ſpoken of. Imprint them in your Memories, grave them upon your Hearts with the Point of a Diamond, and eſpecially take Delight in reducing them to Practice, and you ſhall aſſuredly find both Joy and Comfort. Think often upon Death, let it be the moſt familiar and moſt pleaſant Subject of your Diſcourſe, expect it at every Moment, and lead ſuch a Life as if Death were already upon your Lips. Fear not the many Troubles of this humane Life; doubt not but that God hath determined the Time and Manner of your going out of the World, and that every Kind of Death of the Children of God is precious in his Sight. Since you are to live yet but a ſhort Time upon Earth, ſettle not your Hearts, but poſſeſs your Riches and Advantages, as not poſſeſſing them, remembring, that the Faſhion of the World paſſeth away. Since 'tis Sin alone that makes Death appear ſo terrible to us, hate all manner of Vice, and ſtudy the Practice of Piety.

And in regard there is no Body at the Hour of Death but wiſheth that he had lived well, think upon your latter End, and you ſhall never be able to ſin. If your Mind is diſturbed with the Conſideration of thoſe Things which ſhall happen after your Deceaſe, learn to reſt upon the wiſe Providence of God, that ſees into the Depths of Eternity, that provides for all Things, and that draws Light out

of the greateſt Darkneſs. Are you caſt upon a Bed of Sickneſs and Diſeaſe, open the Eye of Faith, and you ſhall ſee your ſelves encompaſſed about with holy Angels, and in the Arms of God himſelf; Dread not the Violence of Pain; for God ſhall never forſake you in your Grief, he ſhall never ſuffer you to be afflicted above what you are able to endure. Fanſie him not as a dreadful and mercileſs Judge, but look upon him as a gracious and loving Father, who deſires not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he ſhould repent and live. If Death appears to you with a frightful Countenance, if it fill you full of Terrors, caſt your Eyes, by Faith upon the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and you ſhall ſee there all the Weapons and Armour of this Death broken in pieces. You ſhall ſee there a divine and Precious Blood running down, which hath ſatisfied for all our Sins, and marked unto you the Way of God's Eternal Sanctuary. Let not the Grave that is digging for you terrifie you, ſince the King of Kings hath been laid there before you, and filled it with his moſt Divine Odours. Let Death ſeem to you never ſo dreadful, remember that our Saviour hath overcome it by his Reſurrection. Fear not therefore to encounter it, for our great God and Saviour ſhall make you partake of his Victory. And that you might cauſe in your Souls an earneſt longing to go to Heaven, look upon Jeſus Chriſt there who prepares a Place for you, and deſires that you ſhould be eternally with him, to behold his Joy and Glory. Fear not the Separation of the Soul from the Body, ſince Death, which ſhall ſeparate you from your ſelves, is not able to ſeparate you from the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, the Soul of our Souls, the Seal of the Promiſes of God, and the Earneſt of our future Inheritance. Inſtead of looking behind us, and longing for theſe perishing Advantages, and for Honours that can only dazle the Eye; conſider that Death ſhall wipe away all Tears, remove all your Grief, and raiſe you above all the Stores of the World, above all the Miſeries and Troubles that cover the Face of the Earth. That you may be able to follow this Death more chearfully, remember that it draws you out of a Place all polluted with Sin, and infected with Impiety, to tranſport you into a new Heaven adorned with Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, and perfumed with the Prayers, Praiſe and Thankſgivings of the Glorified Saints: Remember that it frees you from all remains of Corruption, and gives Deaths Wound to all your Luſts. Mind not to much the falſe Appearance of Death; for to the Wicked 'tis as it were the Suburbs of Hell, the Jaws of the bottomleſs Pit, and the beginning of their endleſs Torments; but to you, Believers, 'tis the Gate of Heaven, an Entrance into Paradiſe, and a Paſſage to a moſt happy Life. Learn to relish now the Joys wherewith your Souls ſhall be for ever ſatisfied, when God ſhall crown you with his Glory, and make you drink of the Rivers of his Pleaſure. Since your Soul is going to put on a Garment of an Immortal Colour, and to dwell for ever in the Palace which God hath built with his

Almighty

Almighty Hand, caſt off willingly this wretched, infirm and corruptible Body.

Depart willingly out of this Earthly Tabernacle, which turns of it ſelf to Duſt. Conſider well that if it falls by Death, it ſhall riſe again at the Reſurrection, and that when it ſhall have been the dwelling and the food of Worms, it ſhall at laſt become the Temple of God, and the Tabernacle of his Glory. Finally, O Religious Souls, ſhut your Eyes to the World, and to all the Vanities that the World adores, and aſpire to the real Advantages which God hath prepared for you before the Creation of the World, and which you ſhall injoy when the World ſhall be no more. Let your precious Faith, and your bleſſed Hope, enter into Eternity it ſelf, to behold that extraordinary Happineſs and Glory which God ſhall accompliſh when he ſhall bring us both in Soul and Body into this Celeſtial Paradiſe, to ſee his Face, in which is fulneſs of Joy.

In regard this perfect Happineſs, and infinite Glory, which never entered into the Heart and Thoughts of Man, ſhall never be perfectly accompliſhed, but at that Day when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall appear from Heaven, to be glorified in his Saints, and to become wonderful in all Believers; think always upon this Glorious Day, the end of all our Wiſhes, the fulfilling of all our Hopes, and the Perfection of all their Deſigns which God hath purpoſed in himſelf from all Eternity.

You *devout Souls*, that are grieved to ſee the World proſper, and *Satan*'s Empire flouriſh; to ſee God's Children ſubject to all the Darts of Death, take good Courage, and rejoyce with an holy Joy; for ſhortly all the Enemies of God and of your Salvation ſhall be puniſh'd with an everlaſting puniſhment, as from the preſence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power. Shortly, the Devil, his Angels, his Agents and Slaves ſhall be bound up in Chains of Darkneſs, and caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, and ſhut up in the bottomleſs Pit. Shortly Death ſhall be no more, and this Church of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe Miſeries and Afflictions cauſe you to weep, ſhall be cloathed with unſpeakable Light and Glory. It ſhall enter with Joy and Triumph into the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and you your ſelves ſhall ſing with all the glorified Armies of Heaven.

Since Chriſt ſhall come as a Thief in the Night, and ſhall ſurprize all the Children of the World unawares, to incline your Souls, *Believers*, to the love of God, and expectation of your Merciful Lord; behave your ſelves in the ſame manner as you would do if you were now at the Eve of this great Feſtival, as if you did ſpy already the breaking of this moſt happy Day. Entertain now the ſame Affections and Joy, as if you did hear the Voice of God, and the Trumpet of the Archangel, as if the Earth was already in a Flame, and as if Jeſus Chriſt himſelf were coming in the Clouds of Heaven. And in regard no impure thing ſhall enter into the Heavenly and Holy *Jeruſalem*, and that without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Face of God;

cleanse your selves, *Christians*, from all Filthiness of the Flesh, and of the Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord. Forsake all manner of Vice, give your selves over to Vertue, and to the Practice of good Works; imitate the Diligence of the faithful Servant, that you may not be ashamed at the Coming of your Great Master. Take heed that ye be not like the Wise Virgins, that slept as well as the Foolish; but watch and pray that you may not enter into Temptation, for the Spirit is willing, but the Flesh is weak. Redeem the time, for the Days are evil, and make hast to put on the Garments of Righteousness and Innocence; fill your Hearts with the Holy Oyl of Faith, of Hope and Charity. Take your Lamps in your Hands, and let your Souls shine with a divine Light.

In this blessed Disposition, let us go and meet our heavenly Bridegroom, and hasten his Coming by our Prayers and Groans. Let our Souls be full of Love, let them sigh for our Divine Jesus and, being moved with the same Affections as St. *John*, let us say to him with an earnest Desire, *Come, Lord Jesus*; and if he answers, *for certain I come quickly*, let the Longing of our Souls encrease more and more, that we may be able to pray more fervently, and let this Cry reach up to Heaven; *Come, Lord Jesus, even come Lord, come quickly*. Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Believing Soul, that rejoyceth and comforts it self in looking upon Death's Destruction, and the Everlasting and Blessed Life which we hope to enjoy, both in Soul and Body after the Resurrection.

O Great Judge of the World, Author of Life and Happiness! Thy Grace hath bestowed upon me the Seeds of Immortality, the First-Fruits of Glory and the Foretasts of everlasting Delights: By Faith I have a Prospect into those Joys and Felicities of Paradice, into which my Soul shall enter at its Departure out of this wicked World, and into that Glory prepared for my Body at thy Appearing. O raise my Mind to eye continually that compleat and unspeakable Felicity and Glory promised to both Soul and Body, when thou shalt be revealed from Heaven with Flames of Fire, to take Vengeance of Unbelievers, and to glorifie the Saints. Let me not be unmindful of that magnificent Throne, where thou shalt sit to judge the Quick and the Dead, before which the greatest Princes and Monarchs, as well as their meanest Subjects and Slaves, must appear, to hear the just Sentence of their Doom, and receive the Rewards of their Deeds. Grant that I may now rejoice in Expectation of that happy Day, in which all the Enemies of thy Glory and our Salvation, shall be destroyed, in which Satan, his Angels, and wicked Agents

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and Inſtruments of his Kingdom ſhall be bound in Chains, and caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, from whence they ſhall never be releaſed; in which Death ſhall be no more, all the Living ſhall become Immortal, and thy Church ſhall be crown'd. and enter in Triumph into that magnificent City, built with Gold, Pearls, and precious Stones, where thy Glory ſhall continue for ever to enlighten it, and accompliſh our Happineſs. O that I may now expect with Comfort and Joy, that bleſſed State, where we ſhall neither hunger nor thirſt, but be advanced to the Condition and Perfection of Angels, be cloathed with Light and Glory, and being crowned with an Eternal Felicity, rejoice with the Celeſtial Societies of Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, Confeſſors, and Martyrs, and with all the Princes and Monarchs, who have lived, and are departed in thy Fear and Favour, and where we ſhall be admitted to the Viſion of God, and be changed and ſatisfied with his Divine Likeneſs. O Lord! grant that I may always have this glorious and happy Day in my Thoughts, when all thy Promiſes ſhall be fulfilled, all thy Works finiſhed, and our Deſires and Expectations fully accompliſhed, and becauſe this Time and Day is unknown to us, give us Grace to live always waiting for it, as if we were at the Eve of this Eternal Sabbath, that our Lamps may be trim'd, provided, and burn with the Oil of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and we ready and awake at thy glorious Appearing, cloathed with a Wedding Garment, fit to enter with thee into Eternal Bleſſedneſs. Grant us Grace to deſire and look for this promiſed Redemption, long to hear the Sound of the laſt Trumpet. and behold thy Coming in the Clouds if Heaven. O Divine Saviour! that we may aſcend to meet thee, and welcome thy glorious Appearance. O Lord, forgive our impatient Wiſhes, and haſten that Day for the Elects Sake. Come with thy powerful Angels, and the Miniſters of thy heavenly Court, to execute Juſtice on thine Enemies, and deliver thy Servants. Come and put an End to this wicked World, infected with Sin, and ſubject to Corruption and Vanity, and purge the Heavens and the Earth from all Pollution. Come and take Vengeance for the innocent Blood of thy Martyrs, ſhed by Antichriſt and his cruel Agents; bind the Devils in Chains of Darkneſs, and ſhut them up with Death for ever in the bottomleſs Pit. Lord Jeſus, have pity on the Cries and Sufferings of thy diſtreſſed People. Come and deliver them out of this cruel Egypt, out of this abominable Babylon, where they continue in Captivity. O merciful Lord! Is it not Time that thou ſhouldeſt bring us to thy Celeſtial Canaan? Give us to taſt of the Milk and Honey of the moſt refined Joys and Comforts, and introduce us into thine holy Jeruſalem, the City of Peace and Everlaſting Reſt: Come therefore and wipe away the Tears, and ſtop the Crying of thine afflicted People. Take them out of this infamous Priſon, open to them the Gates of thy magnificent Palace, cloath them with Light, and perfect thy Salvation and their Happineſs. We have been a long While con-

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tending with our Spiritual and Temporal Enemies, in our tedious and troubleſome Journey thro' the World, and at a diſtance from thee, we now long to be nearer to thee. O wonderful Redeemer! who haſt accompliſhed all thy Works, and that of our Redemption by thy Blood and Sufferings, perfect alſo, we beſeech thee, that of our Glorification, Receive us and thy Church into that compleat Felicity prepared for us from the Beginning of the World, and purchaſed with thy precious Blood and Sufferings. O merciful God! admit us to that State where we have nothing to fear, nothing to deſire, and nothing to wiſh for, but be always employed in praiſing thine infinite Bounty and Mercy: Join our Voices with the Anthems of the Holy Angels, that with thy Bleſſed Saints we may be able to ſay; Now is come Salvation and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Chriſt. For Death is ſwallowed up in Victory, and the Grand Accuſer of our Brethren is ſhut up in the Bottomleſs Pit, which accuſed them before our God Day and Night. And they have overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb, and have not loved their own Lives unto Death. Unto him, who hath loved and waſhed us from all our Sins, in his Blood, and hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God his Father, to him I ſay, as to the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be Glory, Power, and Dominion for ever. Amen.

An Account of ſome Remarkable Paſſages relating to Mr. Drelincourt, *who departed this Life at* Paris, *the* 4th *of* November, 1669; *taken out of the* French *Edition of his Book of Death; but never before printed in* Engliſh.

TO prevent falſe Reports ſpread abroad, concerning the Death of our Reverend Author, I thought it convenient to publiſh this brief and exact Narrative concerning his Perſon, Sickneſs, and Death: He was of a very ſtrong and healthy Conſtitution, indefatigable in his Miniſtry; of ſuch a ſharp and active Spirit, and ſo Pious for the Glory of God, that he ſpared not himſelf, either by Night, or by Day, in diſcharging the Duty of his Function, and in Acts of Charity, being naturally of a courteous and obliging Temper. He ſucceeded Mr. *Du Moulin*, who was removed to *Sedan*, and was a long time the third Miniſter to ſerve that vaſt Congregation at *Charenton*: This continual and reſtleſs Imployment in his Miniſtry, by degrees mightily impaired his Health, eſpecially in the Declenſion of his Age.

In the Year 1668, the 30th of *April*, tho' indiſpoſed, he adventured to accompany one of his Grand-Daughters to her Grave, aſſiſted by one of his Sons, but could ſcarce return Home, being weary and in a fainting Sweat, and his Countenance chang'd, which alarm'd his Family; but by ſome preſent Remedy, he then recover'd. This

Accident

Accident hindred him not from preaching the next Day at *Charenton* in his turn, nor from his daily Offices, wiſhing often he might die with his Pen in his Hand. When his Family intreated him to ſpare himſelf in his old Age, in viſiting the Sick and Poor, unto whom he was very acceptable by reaſon of his excellent Talents in praying and underſtanding how to comfort the diſeaſed: He told them, that he had once that Reſolution, but the Importunities of his People, and the deſire he had to be ſerviceable to them, would not ſuffer him to omit doing it.

In a ſtormy Seaſon, at Nine of the Clock at Night, he adventur'd to viſit a departing Soul, and return'd not till after Midnight, and ſeemed very glad to be able to perform it; but theſe continual Fatigues made him paſs this Judgment upon himſelf, That he could not long continue, and therefore was in a conſtant Preparation for his Change.

This made him frequently to peruſe his Book of *Conſolations againſt Death*, praiſing God, who aſſiſted him in publiſhing ſuch an uſeful Work: He was then writing ſeveral other Excellent Treatiſes, which he earneſtly deſired to finiſh, with ſubmiſſion to the great Wiſdom of God, as he expreſſeth himſelf in a Prayer at the end of the Book call'd *the Charitable Viſits*. *Lord* (ſaith he) *I have lived and preached a long time; I wait for thy Salvation and Deliverance; I am not weary to ſerve ſo good a Maſter, and ſo bountiful a Lord; but oh my God! when it ſhall pleaſe thee to put an end to my Labours, I ſhall depart to a fulneſs of Joy into thy glorious Reſt.*

This he writ the Year before his Death; the next Year he had ſome Intervals of perfect Health, but they were follow'd by two dangerous Relapſes: The firſt was in *April*. Yet tho' indiſpoſed, he forc'd himſelf to preach at *Charenton*, againſt the Advice of his Phyſicians and he continued in the Exerciſe of his Function. On the 9th of *May* he open'd the Synod of *Charenton*, and at the Concluſion of his Speech, he received the Applauſes of his Brethren there aſſembled, for which he gave God Thanks for having enabled him with ſo much Strength; and on the 12th of *Sept.* 1669, being a Faſt-day, he preached again twice in the *Court* of the *Temple* with much Freedom and Vigour. This Interval of Health continu'd till the 27th of *October* following, when in his Turn he preach'd at *Charenton*, and his Auditors found that he ſpake with much Freedom, and powerfully. 'Tis remarkable, that he left the Epiſtle of St. *Peter* that he was expounding before, and choſe for a Text, 51 *Pſalm*, 7 and 8 verſes, *Purge me with Hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean, waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than Snow.*

This laſt Sermon was looked upon afterwards as a preſage he had of his Death, and as a Preparation for it, by deſiring the Pardon of his Sins, and a cleanſing from all the Pollutions of the Fleſh and Spirit, thro' the infinite Mercy of God, and of the Blood of his Saviour: The whole Audience were very well ſatisfied with his laſt Performance

formance, which they judg'd to be excellent and worthy to crown all his former religious Exercises. At his Return to the City he spent the rest of the Sabbath in the Acts of Piety and Charity; and at his Return Home, being desirous to enjoy the Company of all his Family, then at *Paris*, he supp'd with them, and seem'd very pleasant in Discourse; he continu'd well on *Monday*, and the next Day till the 29th Day of *September*, the fatal Day in which his *mortal Distemper* began to attack him; from that Morning he felt an Indisposition, and had no Appetite at Dinner, yet could not forbear visiting sick Persons in his District. This good Man came home very feeble, and out of Order, with a Fever upon him: Some time after his Speech fail'd him; and when Mr. *Malnoe* (Advocate in *Parliament*, his Son in Law) was come to visit him, he was scarce able to speak; he was perswaded to take his Rest, and suddenly fell upon his Knees, and made such an excellent Prayer, that his Family never heard from him one more fervent: He discours'd *of the Frailty of Human Life, of the Condition he was in, of the Church of God, and insisted earnestly upon her Deliverence*; he pray'd for all the Members of his Family, and in this last religious Exercise perform'd among his Domesticks, he omitted nothing material, pray'd with Zeal and Vigour, with a clear Voice, and without Hesitation, to their Comfort, and his own Satisfaction being then only a little feverish. In this hopeful Condition he went to Bed; but about Midnight he relaps'd again into the former Difficulty of Speech: the Fever increasing upon him by degrees, a Physician by his Prescriptions gave him Relief; and he remember'd the *Psalms* which he was wont to repeat, namely, the 31, 32, 34, 41, 51, 63, 116, and 130. He had always a great Veneration for the Book of *Psalms*, which made him like the reading of *John de Lere*; who writes, how some *Savages* of *Brasil* were wonderfully affected, and ravish'd at the hearing of one of those Divine Hymns sung. A certain Person that came to visit him, pray'd that God would change his Bed of Sickness into a Bed of Health: He answer'd, My Bed of Health and Rest will be in *Paradise*. A *noble Lady*, then a close Prisoner, for whom our sick Person had a high Esteem, having sent to enquire of his Health, he told the Messenger he was very sorry for her Confinement order'd him to present his Service to the good Lady, and to tell her that he should see her no more but in *Heaven*.

During this short Interval, his Mind was free to discourse about his domestick Affairs; but in a little time after his Cough and Fever encreasing violently upon him, his Physician watch'd with him till the Morning. Our Patient perceiving his dangerous Condition, spake in this manner to him. *Sir, tho all good Christians ought continually to be prepared to die, and tho' God hath granted me the Grace to be ready when he shall please to call me; yet if you find I am drawing to my End, pray give me notice of it, for I am willing to put my Affairs in Order.* About 2 or 3 Hours after, the Physician finding he could not live much longer, 'twas judg'd convenient by his Son-in-Law

to

to acquaint him with it; to whon he ſpake to this Purpoſe. *I find the Time of my Deliverance is drawing near, and that God will take me to his Reſt, I ſhall be glad to diſcourſe with you privately; I have not only look'd upon you as my Son-in-Law, but as my Child, whom I have lov'd, and tenderly love; I recommend my Family to your Care, and deſire you all to live in a perfect Union.* And having given his Bleſſing to all his Children, as well abſent as preſent, he order'd the private Affairs of his Family, and the Rewards to be given to thoſe that had been ſerviceable to him in his Sickneſs, and order'd his *Son-in Law* to intreat Mr. *Girard*, the Elder of his Church, to carry this Meſſage to the *Conſiſtory* of *Charenton*, that he dy'd their faithful Servant, and pray'd God with all his heart to preſerve the Church.

After this he ſpent moſt part of his time in prayer to God, repeating ſeveral Texts of Scripture, but with ſuch a weak Voice, they could only gueſs by ſome Syllables what he ſaid: He was often heard to repeat the Words of *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; and thoſe of the *Pſalms*, *I have put my Truſt in thee*, &c, *I recommend my Soul into thy Hands.* Thus he continu'd in his Pious Meditations. Then his *Son-in-Law* offer'd to read to him out of his *Book of Conſolations againſt the Fears of Death*, which he attended to, and ſeem'd to be well pleas'd with the *Conſolation for a dying Miniſter*, and with the Prayer appointed for ſuch a one who fac'd Death with a holy Joy: That is (ſaid he) very good; I don't ſpeak it becauſe it came from me: God be prais'd, that he enabl'd me to publiſh this Book to comfort others and my ſelf. The next Morning the 1ſt of *November*, when Mr. *Girard* came to viſit him, he repeated to him the ſame Words that he had given to his *Son-in-Law* in charge to tell him, and deliver'd to him a Bill to be pray'd for publickly in the Congregation. At that time Mr. *Daille*, Mr. *Morus*, and Mr. *Claude* came to ſee him, expreſſing their tender Affection and Concernment for him; at which he ſeem'd to be mov'd. Mr. *Daille* made a pathetick Exhortation, which the Patient kindly excepted, and ſpeaking of the Loſs the Church ſhould ſuſtain by his Death, Mr. *Drelincourt* anſwer'd, *Sir, you are far more uſeful to her then I can be, my Deſire is to depart and be with Chriſt, which is far better for me*: At which Words Mr. *Daille* askt him, Don't you add with the *Apoſtle*, that it is more neceſſary for the Church, that you ſhould continue in the Fleſh? He reply'd, *God will raiſe Miniſters who ſhall diſcharge their Duty better then I can.* When Mr. *Daille* ask'd him, whether his Hope was not in the Mercy of God? He anſwered him with divers Texts of Scripture, ſuch as theſe, *I know in whom I have believ'd; I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſh'd my Courſe, I have kept the Faith*, &c. *I draw towards the mark of the Prize of the high Calling*, &c.

Mr. *Daille* perceiving how painful his Speech was to him, adviſ'd him to ſpeak only to himſelf, to hinder the increaſe of his Diſtemper; but he anſwer'd, *how willing he was to glorify God to the laſt gaſp, and edify by his Speech, ſuch as were there preſent*: Then having embrac'd

each

each other at their parting, Mr. *Daille* told him, he did not altogether deſpair of his Recovery, and that he hop'd God would ſave him according to the Prayers of the Church. He reply'd, *The Will of the Lord be done, I reſign my ſelf intirely to the order of his Providence:* The two other Miniſters were not wanting in their Prayers and Exhortations. About Noon theſe Gentlemen left him to his Reſt, which he deſir'd then to take; but inſtead of ſleeping, he was heard to pray very earneſtly three or four times, and concluded each Prayer with *Our Father*, and *I believe in God*, &c. He gave his Bleſſing to all his Children, and to them that deſir'd it of him. That Afternoon Mr. *Claude* return'd to him again, and continu'd till 6; our Patient anſwer'd him diſtinctly, but briefly, by reaſon of his great Weakneſs: About 11 of the Clock at Night, ſeveral Phyſicians came to him; and at their firſt ſight of him they urg'd, that there was ſcarce any hopes of him; mean time he was praying and addreſſing himſelf to God, but could not well be underſtood. Yet when a Lady, one of his intimate Friends, came to his Bed ſide, he ſaid, *Madam, you are an Eye Witneſs of my Groans and Sufferings; but I cannot well ſpeak to you.* And about 10. at Night he called to mind, that a Pledge of ſome Value had been committed to his keeping, he order'd it to be taken out of his Cloſet, brought to him, examin'd if [illegible] all there, and gave order to reſtore it to the right Owner.

His ſecond Son, Miniſter of the reformed Church of *Fountainbleau*, came into the Room to ſee his dear Father departing, who knew him, and ſeem'd to be mov'd at the firſt ſight of him; Mr. *Claude*, then askt him if he knew his Son, he anſwer'd, *Yes*; this was the laſt Word he was heard diſtinctly to ſpeak; His Son aſſiſted his dying Father with his Exhortations and Prayers; he was ſenſible to the laſt; his Countenance never chang'd till about an hour before he deceaſed; and tho' Nature was ſtrugling with the Deceaſe, and he tormented with a burning Fever, he ſeem'd by his Looks to be tranſported with Joy, and full of Comfort. On *Sunday* the 3d of *November* 1669, this Reverend Divine yielded up his Soul unto God.

This was the end of this holy and zealous Servant of God, who departed this Life in the 74th Year of his Age, the 52d Year of his Miniſtry, and in the 50th Year after his being call'd to ſerve the Reformed Church of *Paris*. He died in the Bed of Honour, in the Exerciſe of the Duties of his Function, preaching the Goſpel, writing in Vindication of the Truth, and comforting the Sick, *&c.*

The Eloquent Tongues of Mr. *Daille* and Mr. *Morus*, from the Pulpit of *Charenton*, the Tears of the whole Congregation that day and the next, when they committed his Body to the Grave, in Expectation of a joyful Reſurrection, (in a word, the Commendation of People of both Religions) ſufficiently verify'd the ſaying of *Solomon, The Memory of the Juſt is bleſſed:* The Portraiture of his Excellent, Learned and Religious Mind may be ſeen in his works, particularly in this uſeful and comfortable Treatiſe, *The Conſolations againſt the Fears of Death.*

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We doubt not but he is gone to receive in Heaven the incorruptible Crown of Glory, which the great God and Redeemer of our Souls, promiseth of his Mercy to all faithful Servants; God grant we may imitate his Excellent Life, and follow him in his Happy End. *Amen.*

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